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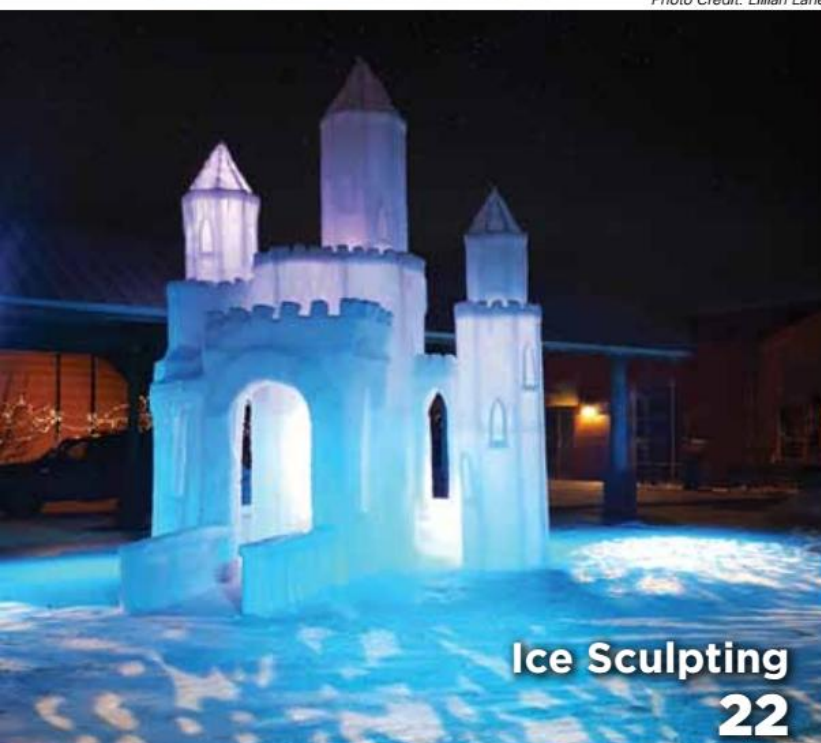
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Farmhouse Modern 29

Photo Credit: Lillian Lane



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Photo Credit: Sabine De Schutter

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COVER: This inspired residence overlooking the river combines a modern style with natural materials to pay homage to the stunning setting. Photo by Scott Prokop.

HOME front

By nature, we Canadians are a humble folk. And we Prairie people are probably even more so. We may not boast or showboat excessively, but that doesn't mean we aren't doing some amazing things here in the Paris of the Prairies.

I'm excited to share some of these projects that we have uncovered and have been blown away by in this issue. Enjoy a behind-the-scenes look at the strikingly designed Sask Cres. home, a family inspired modern farmhouse, the tale of long sleepless nights of an ice sculpting architect and Saskatoon's own perfume creator. These local stories are the reason we love what we do at *Saskatoon HOME*.

As we enter this busy gift-giving season, I encourage you to shop local. We have many wonderful businesses, both big and small, throughout these pages and we are thankful for every single one of them. We are proud to be a part of this thriving Saskatoon business community and honoured to be the ones sharing these stories that will surely bring a smile to your face.

Happy Reading!

Amanda Soulodre

OWNER & PUBLISHER



Photo Credit: Jennifer Butler

HOME

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Meet the HOME Team

SPOTLIGHT: WRITER/FOODIE



Photo Credit: Maki Photos

Craig Silliphant

So, he usually boils it down to one element: he's a writer.

"Whether I'm talking about movies on the air, pounding out a magazine article, or writing ad copy to help grow a client, I consider it writing," he says. "I love learning about people and ideas and telling those stories clearly and concisely. And hey, who ever thought I'd be able to use that English degree for something useful?"

Craig is Creative Director at Rawlco Creative Strategies and Thoughtlab Media, where he manages teams of writers, audio producers, administrators, and graphic and web designers. You'll also hear him talking about film, television, music, food, and Saskatoon on Rawlco

Radio stations, CBC Radio, and CFCR Community Radio. You'll see him on television stations like CTV, Global, and Shaw Spotlight. He has written for publications like the Saskatoon *StarPhoenix*, *The Edmonton Journal*, *The National Post*, *Planet S Magazine*, and websites like *TheFeedbackSociety.com*.

Craig worked in film, and co-wrote and co-produced countless music videos for CMT and MuchMusic as well as an award-winning Global TV national documentary about missing and murdered Aboriginal women, *Stolen Sisters*. He also wrote a local, best-selling book about the Saskatoon music scene called *Exile Off Main Street*.

Craig loves writing

about food for *Saskatoon HOME* magazine because he gets to meet all kinds of different people who teach him about their cultures and families through recipes and traditions.

"People say so much by teaching me how to make their food," he says. "I learn about their lives by hearing them talk about the perogies their baba made at Christmas when they were kids on the farm, or a dish they make that reminds them of growing up in Pakistan."

Craig is using a lot of these recipes and ideas with his own family. He lives in Saskatoon with his wife, his six-year-old son, and his 11-month-old daughter. 🍷

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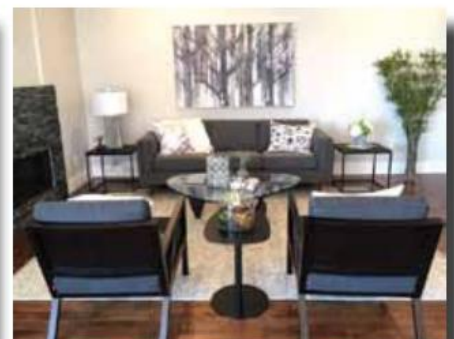
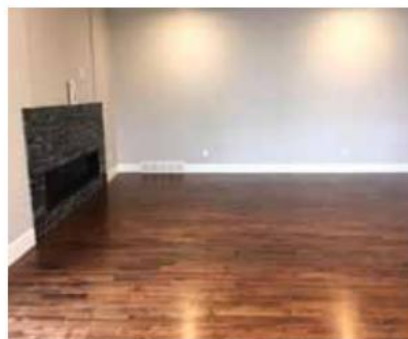


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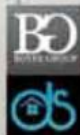


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A BEAUTIFUL SUCCESS ON THE RIVER

If you've ever gone for a leisurely stroll along Saskatchewan Crescent East, you know the house. Overlooking the river, it stands solid and resolute. It's bold and dramatic, but still exudes warmth through the vitality of its exterior finishes.

Horizontal accoya wood and thick columns of chip-faced limestone temper the grey stucco and steel fascia.

The limestone continues inside the house, and was used to "bridge the inside and outside," says Lucienne Van Langen, the interior designer

and owner of Luminary Design. The original owners hired Luminary to design the home's interior and exterior from the ground up.

Entertaining Ease

Once inside, it's clear this is a home built for

entertaining. A three-sided fireplace creates warmth and ambience in the entry and living room. "The fireplaces were important to the clients. There is one on each floor," says Lucienne. "It's also a central design feature because the limestone is



 **JULIE BARNES**

 **SCOTT PROKOP**

on every single floor and it forms the entire chimney chase inside and out.”

The limestone carries over into the dining room, where it runs along the entire west wall of the house, creating a textural backdrop to a 16-seat custom dining table. Made

from reclaimed Dutch elm by a company in Manitoba, it’s fused together down the centre with a custom-coloured purple resin.

“The entire main floor was designed primarily open-concept so the owners could have up to 60 people for ➤



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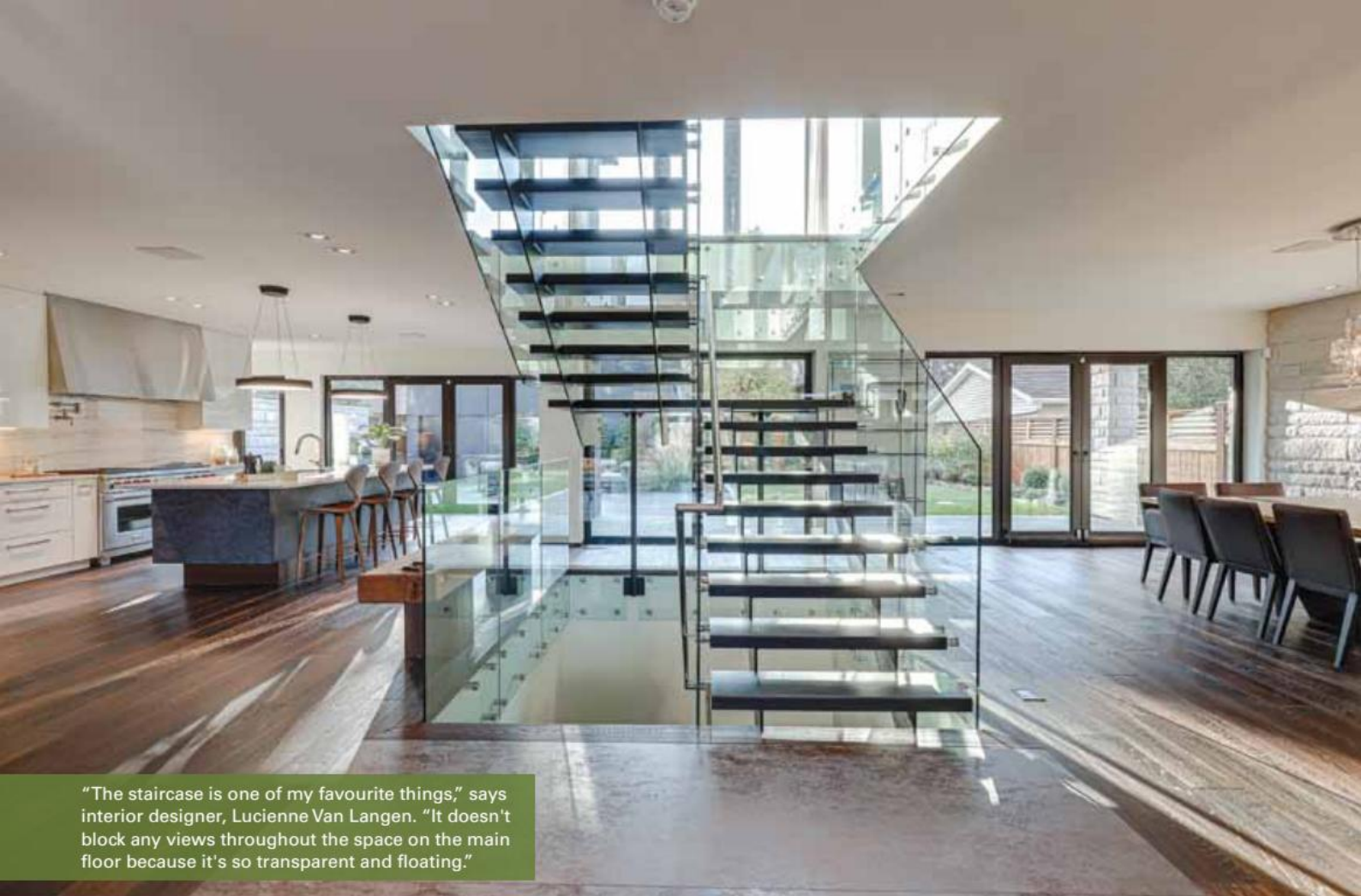


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"The staircase is one of my favourite things," says interior designer, Lucienne Van Langen. "It doesn't block any views throughout the space on the main floor because it's so transparent and floating."



Walnut millwork (at left) conceals a spacious butler's pantry, which includes a bar sink, microwave and wine fridge.

private gatherings," says Lucienne. "That's why the back of the house opens out with big slider doors to the back-patio area—so they could have an indoor-outdoor space for those bigger gatherings."

Next to the kitchen, custom walnut millwork conceals a butler's pantry beyond. The millwork does double duty as storage and as a conduit to bring services to the other floors.

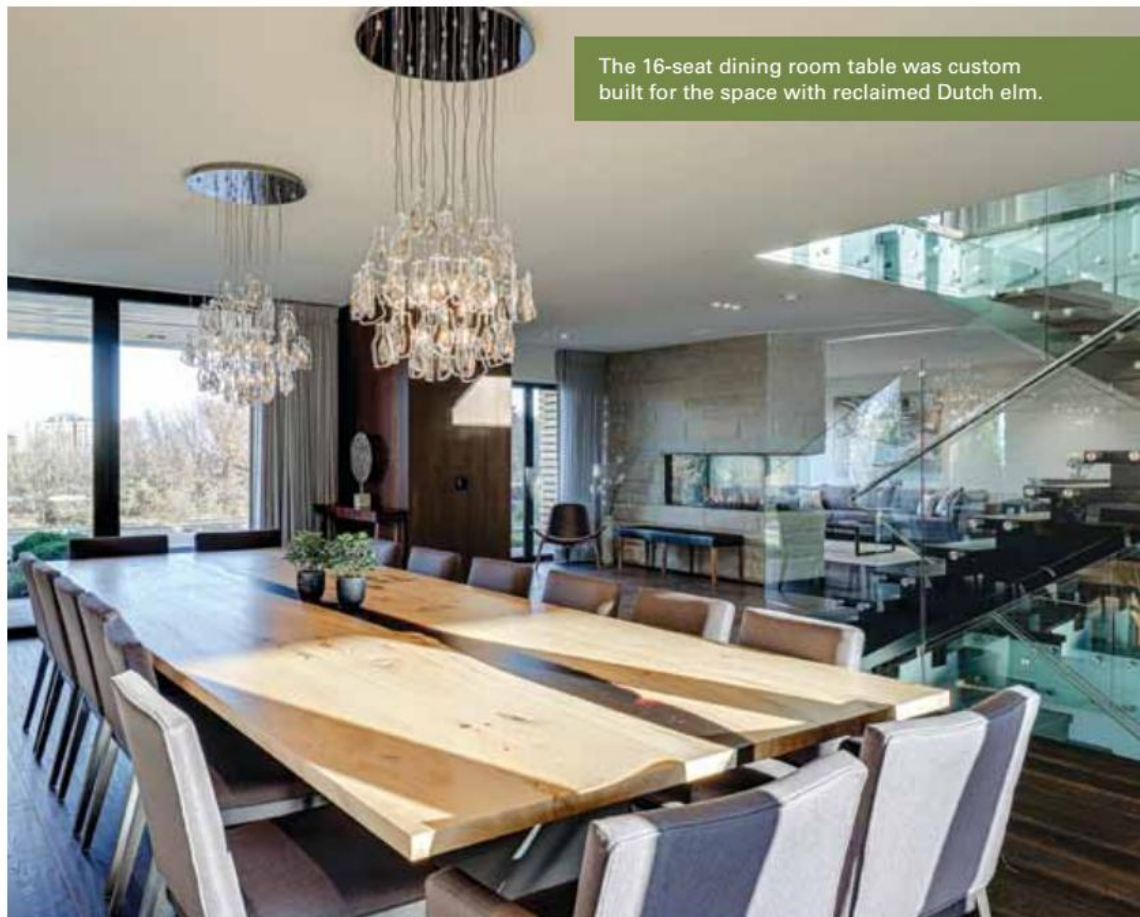
"There are practically no interior walls on the main floor, so that posed a challenge," says Lucienne. "You need to get heating, mechanical, electrical and plumbing lines to the second floor." Lines were also strategically placed within the front closet millwork.

The pièce de résistance is the floating staircase, taking

pride of place in the centre of the main floor. Glass railings and open risers allow sunlight to shine through the space unimpeded. "There's only two little posts that hold up the entire staircase on the back of the landing," says Lucienne. "It's a bit of structural wonder in and of itself, in that it's so light and airy looking."

Over in the kitchen, the attention to detail is unparalleled. Specialized plug-in covers disappear into the quartzite backsplash, thanks to the talents of a local artist who painted them to match the natural stone's veining. One solid piece of the same quartzite sheathes the 11-foot island.

The back and ends of the island are wrapped in the same 3mm-thick porcelain tile found on the floor of the entry, mudroom and powder room. Stone's ➤



The 16-seat dining room table was custom built for the space with reclaimed Dutch elm.

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Edge Granite custom cut and beveled the tile for the cabinet doors that line the island's backside.

"It's a pretty unique application to use it on the cabinetry doors," says Lucienne. She adds that these large-format tiles (they're 1m x 3m) reduce the amount of grout lines when they're used for flooring.

Upstairs, Downstairs

While the main floor was designed as a public space, the second floor was planned as a private space,

says Lucienne. "The entire second floor was designed to be the master suite." The master bedroom takes advantage of the river vista outside with its expansive windows, outfitted with automatic blinds for privacy. Another wall of limestone with an inset fireplace adds warmth and texture to the space.

Aside from the bedroom, a sitting room, study, master bathroom and spacious dressing room comprise the rest of the second level. An L-shaped balcony wraps

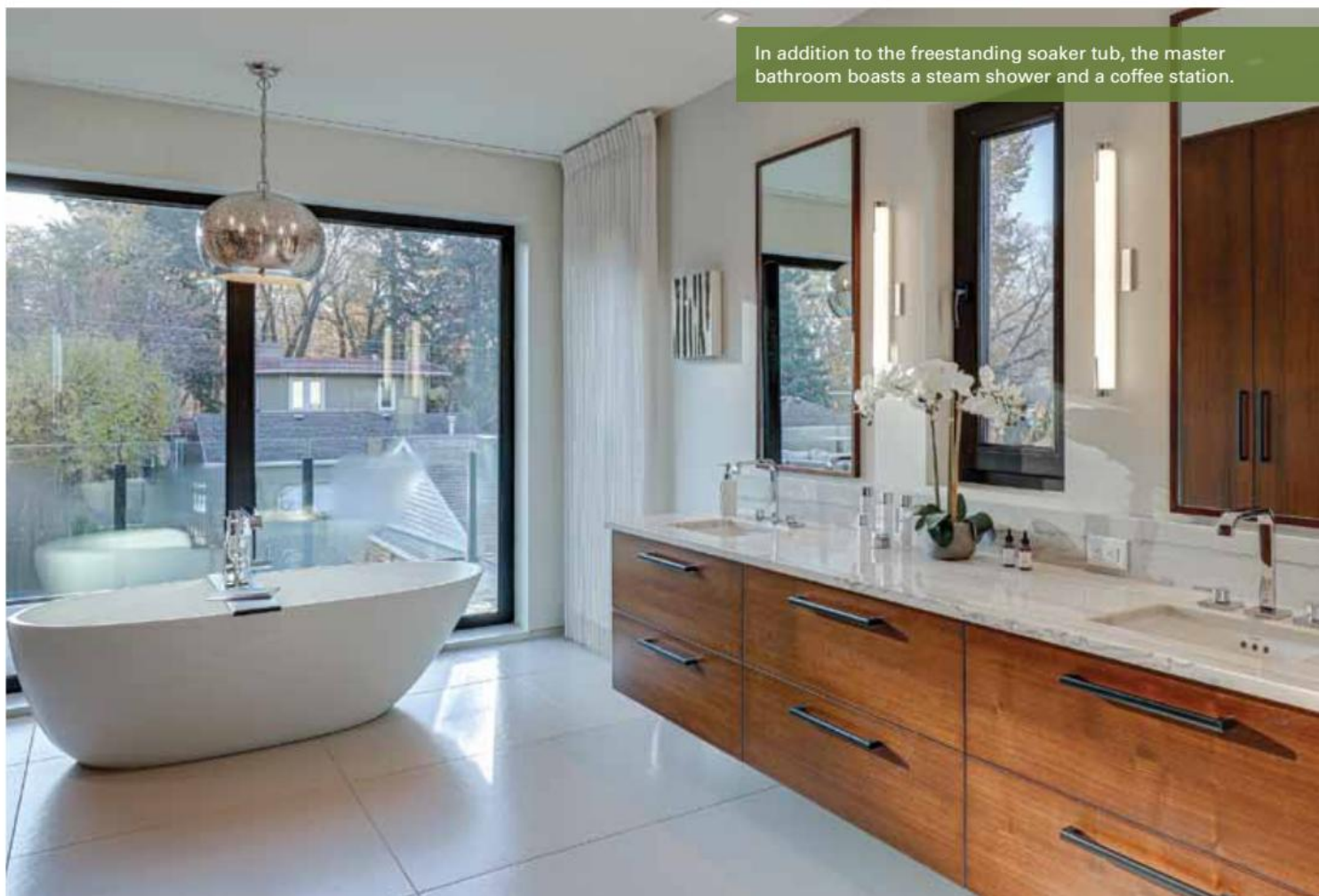
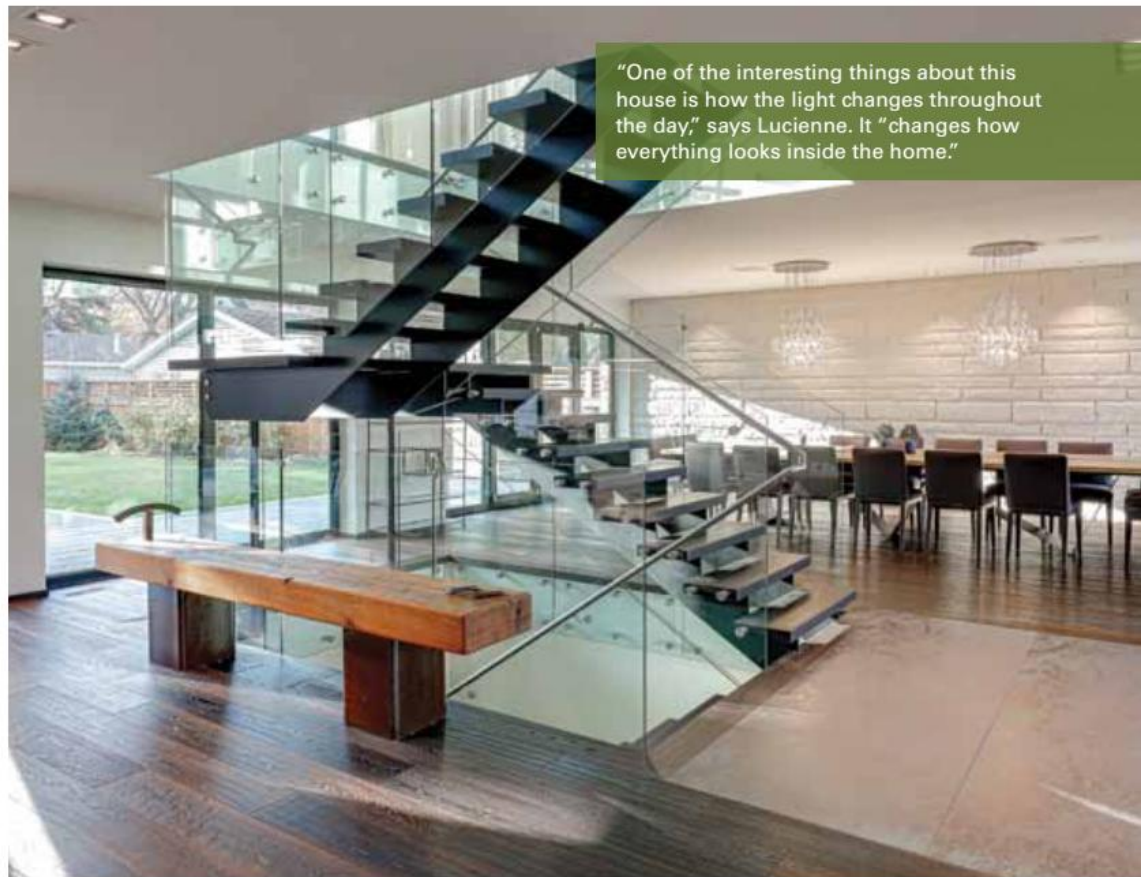
around the north-east corner and the façade.

"There are lots of special details, like the barrel-vault ceiling in the steam shower in the ensuite," says Lucienne. Small, stacked white subway tiles line the curved ceiling of the shower and echo the installation on the floor below. Two large book-matched slabs of quartz (selected to mirror each other from the centre) form the back wall of the shower, and the same quartz forms the floating bench.

The barrel-vaulted ceiling is

both beautiful and functional. "In steam showers, you get condensation on the ceiling, so when you barrel vault them, or angle them, it directs the condensation down the walls so it's not dripping on your head," says Lucienne.

More walnut millwork envelops the spacious dressing room. Several built-in drawers, cabinets, shelves and closet rods provide plenty of storage for clothing, shoes, luggage and accessories. A make-up counter and central ➤



The three-sided fireplace offers ambience and warmth on the main level. A double layer of glass envelops the flames, enabling the ventilation system to draw the heat up and out of the house if the extra warmth isn't necessary.



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island are both topped with the same quartzite used in the kitchen and the ensuite vanity. Although the most recent owners added a washer and dryer to the dressing room, there's a laundry chute hidden behind a cabinet door to send clothes and linens to the basement laundry room.

Lucienne says the basement was planned for visiting family members. Two extra bedrooms, a family room (with another limestone-clad fireplace), a well-equipped gym, guest bathroom and sauna round out this comfortable space.

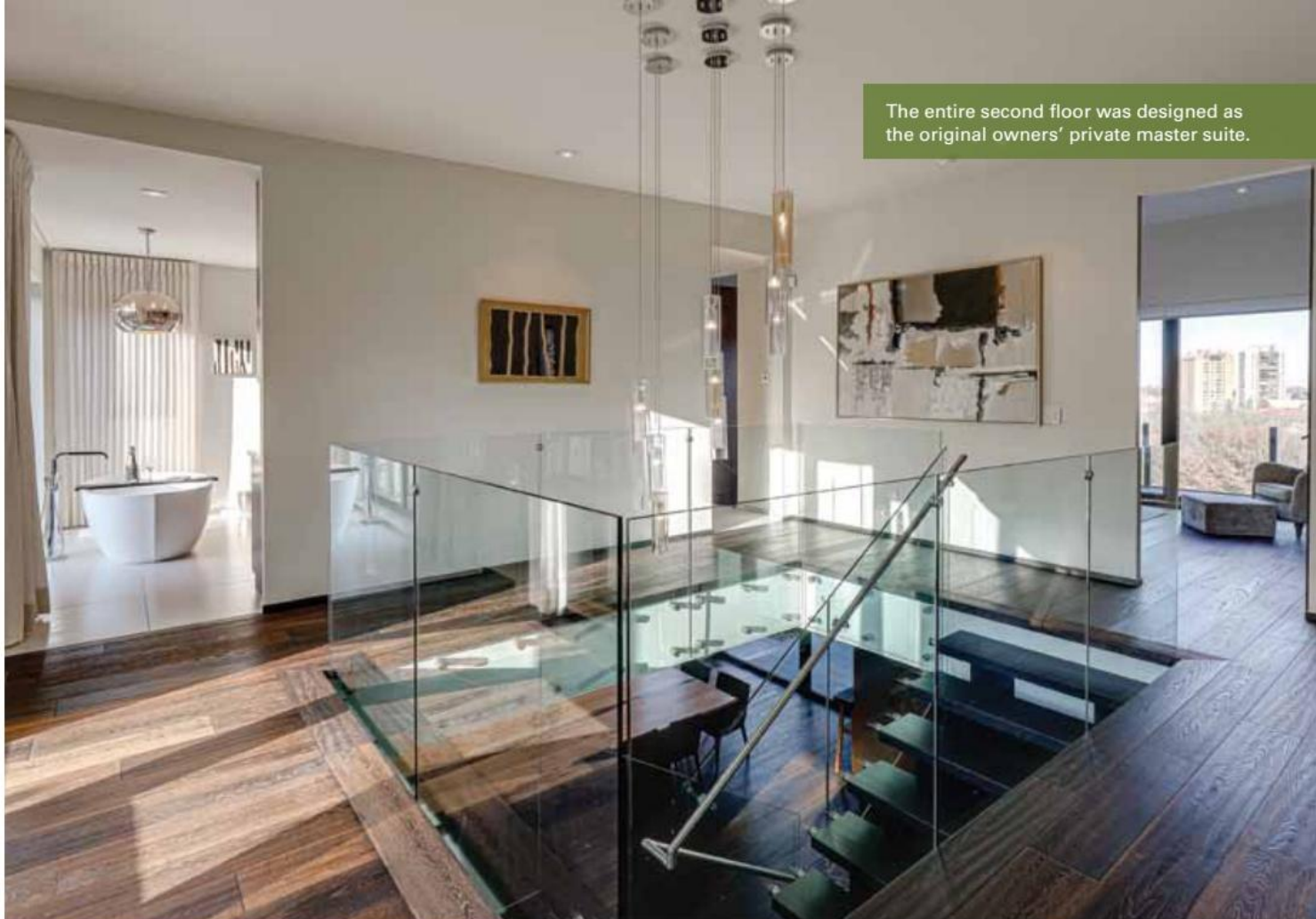
Advanced Automation

The entire home is equipped with a Savant home automation system. Lights, audio, TVs, all three fireplaces, heating and

cooling, blinds, cameras and the security system can be controlled through wall-mounted touch pads on all three levels of the house, or via an app, which allows the owners to control everything remotely.

"Home" and "away" buttons in the app and within the house add an extra level of convenience. When the owner leaves the house, simply tapping the "away" button will turn off the audio, lights, fireplaces, TVs, close the blinds, and set the temperature depending on how the system has been programmed. Once the owners return, pressing the "home" button will turn certain features back on, depending on the settings.

The owners can also create "scenes" through the automation system. For



example, they can create a scene called “entertain,” and program the lights to dim, fireplaces to come on, music to play through the speakers, etc. Each room can be programmed individually depending on how they plan to use the space. Then, before guests arrive, tapping the “entertain” button in the app will adjust everything accordingly.

Light-filled Space

Lucienne says her favourite element of the house is the way sunlight fills the space. “We purposely placed windows in locations that we knew would get beautiful sunlight through,” she says. “When the sun sets, you get this amazing light coming through both ends of the dining room because of the window placement. It

makes the entire dining room glow with this amazing, warm light.”

Hidden From Sight

This is a home where the tangible features you see are just as important as the things you don’t see. The home automation system negates the need for wires, cable boxes and other eyesores. Painted plug-ins seamlessly blend into backsplashes. And outside, an observant eye will notice there are no eavestroughs in sight.

“All the eavestroughs are integrated inside the house so you don’t see them,” says Jeff Johnson, owner of Orko Construction, the company that managed the build. “That was our own design.” They were crafted on site, and were a feature Orko ➤

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hadn't implemented in a project before, says Jeff. "They ended up working really well."

A Beautiful Success

For both Jeff and Lucienne, this was a special project. "It's one of my top favourite houses that we've built so far," Jeff says.

Lucienne echoes the sentiment. "It's still one of my favourite projects that we've ever worked on because of how warm it turned out." She says sometimes large houses can feel cold, "but this one never does. It always feels warm with how the light enters everywhere. It was just a beautiful success in that regard." (i)

Julie Barnes



The front and backyard landscaping includes low-maintenance perennials and native trees. The perennials were strategically selected so there's always something in bloom from spring until fall.

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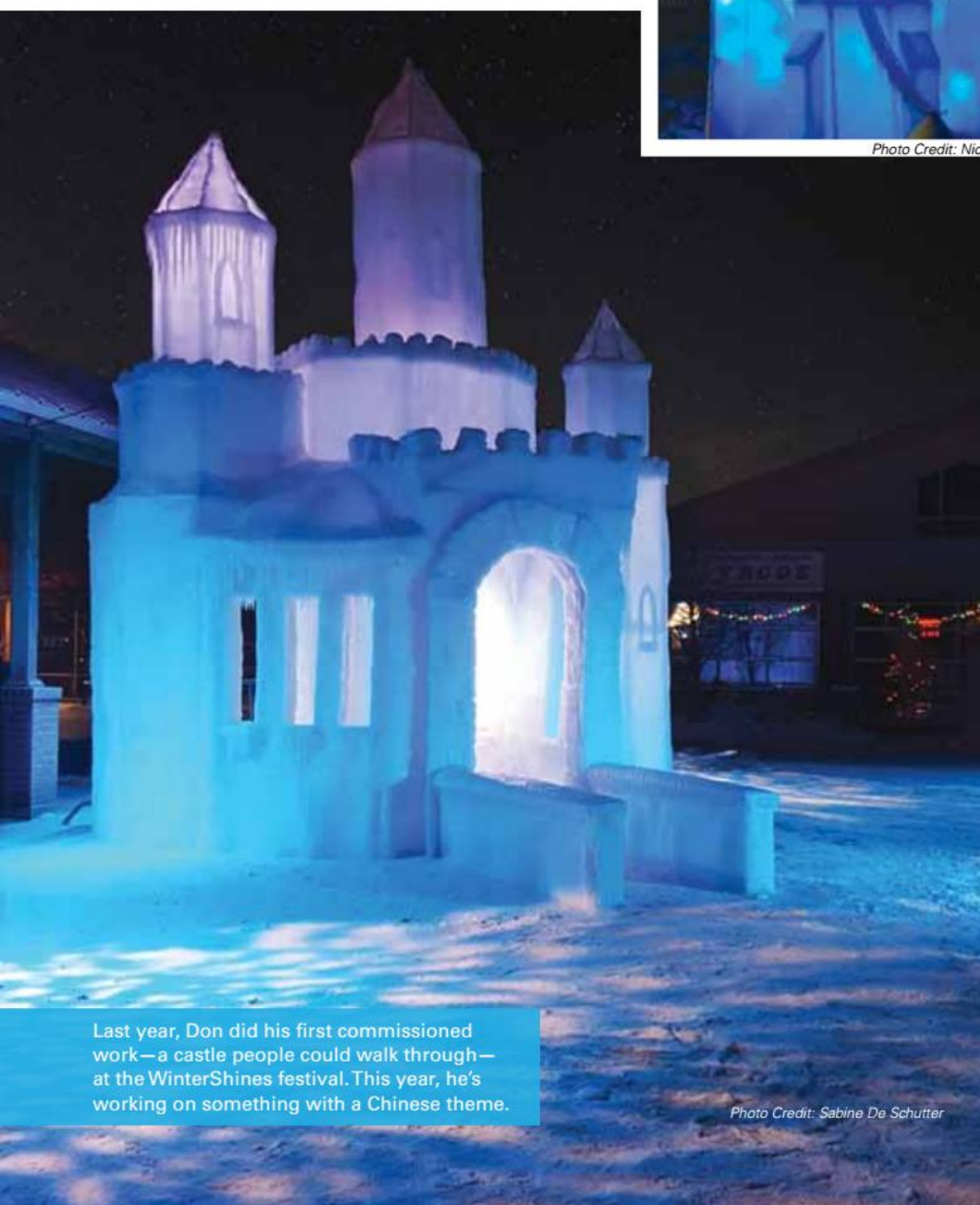
Retired architect Don Greer has catalogued his ice sculptures over the years.



Photo Credit: Nicole Smith

It's a good thing a river runs through Saskatoon. Retired architect Don Greer needs a lot of water. For most of the last five decades, year round, 30 above, 30 below, everything in between.

During the growing season, he's an avid gardener. As a former Saskatoon Horticultural Society board member, he's a multiple award-winning participant in the annual garden tours. Crowds come to admire his yard. But his other passion also involves a garden hose. For decades, Don has created iced sculptures—not the sort carved out of ice blocks—but those using wire mesh and wood armature he literally sprays with a fine mist until the frosted layers are solid and spectacular.



Last year, Don did his first commissioned work—a castle people could walk through—at the WinterShines festival. This year, he's working on something with a Chinese theme.

Photo Credit: Sabine De Schutter

Dipping a Toe In

Don's father was a telephone lineman, and what was a nightmare for his dad became the inspiration for Don's creative flair.

"We lived on Clinkskill Drive and in 1970, Dad and I were putting up a Christmas display. We were missing the North Pole. I went into Dad's shop and found some chicken wire and made a pole," Don recalls. "I knew Dad's biggest fear as a lineman was ice on the lines. So I kept watering down the wire, letting it freeze layer by layer, until we had the North Pole of ice."

Soon Don was fully submerged in the water-to-ice process and created a nativity with Joseph, Mary and the Baby Jesus, sacred and shiny on the surface, chicken wire and wood underneath.

Don was on his way. But the yearning to create and build had been percolating in him for a long time. ➤

An Eye for the Artistic

When he was seven, Don had a pretty solid idea he wanted to be an architect.

"I was always pretty good at art and drawing," Don recalls. "People think that architecture is all about engineering and math. You have to understand that, but those are the tools you need to create something beautiful and functional."

After earning a BA at the University of Saskatchewan in the History of Painting, Sculpture and Architecture, he apprenticed to become a registered architect. He had a long and varied career in health care design and facility planning. He rounded that out with P3Architecture and retired when the Saskatoon office closed in 2014.

All the while there lurked the desire to create mesmerizing ice sculptures that could warm—and melt—hearts during the frigid months of the year.

The Shape of Water

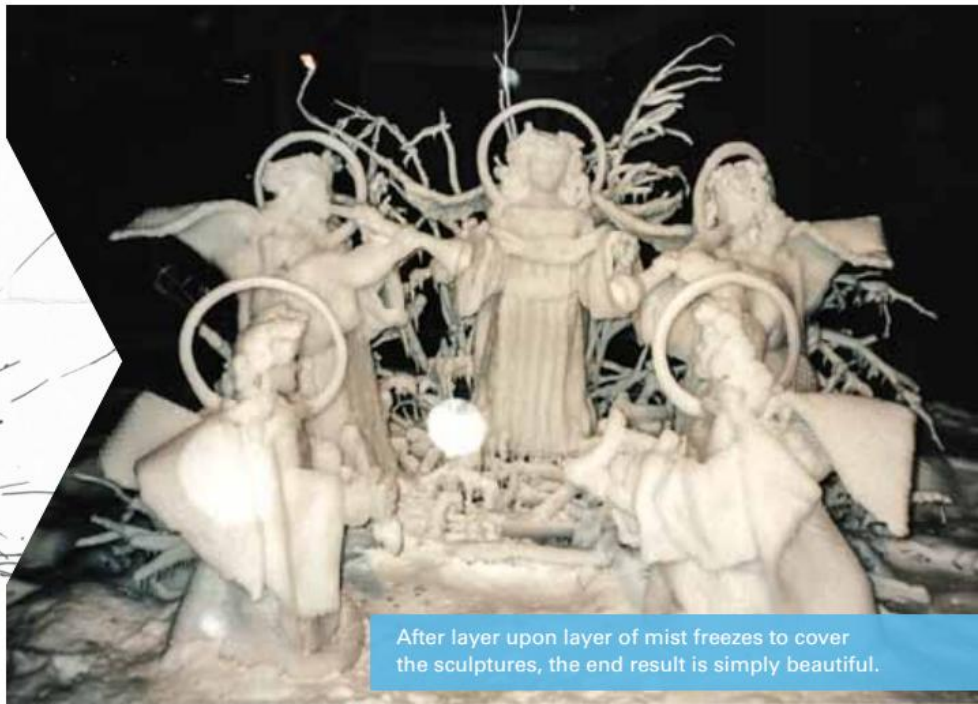
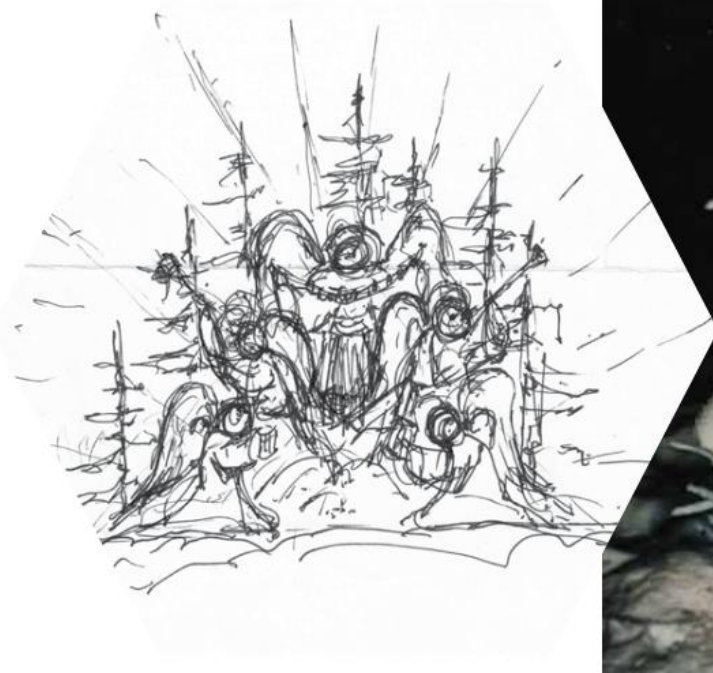
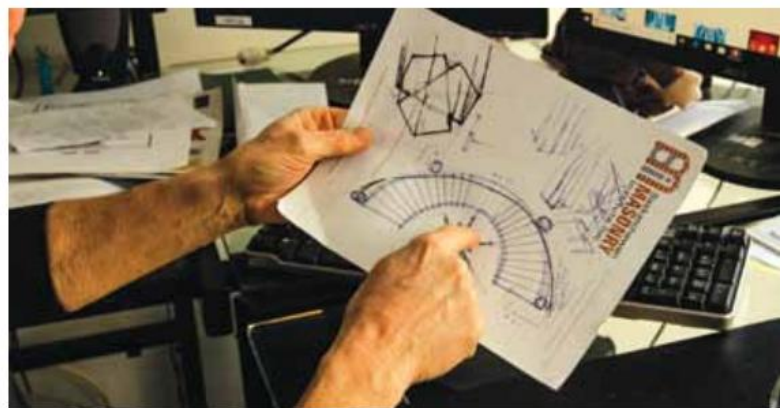
Don works with chicken

wire and various gauges of other types of wire, like that used for chain link fences and even clothes hangers. His lighting techniques have evolved; LED lights that don't give off any heat are a godsend. His palette includes white stained 1 x 2's, drywall screws, one-inch chicken wire, lots of staples, wire, "and a good helping of words you can't print since working with chicken wire leads to a lot of cuts and scratches."

In addition to displays at his home on King Crescent, greatly admired by students at City Park School just across the street, he has been the iceman at Resurrection Lutheran Church for the past 16 years. His creations there have celebrated the Christmas season with several nativities, a little church, 'Three Ships Come Sailing In,' the Christmas Rose, NOEL, and an Advent wreath. All have drawn admirers from all over the city. He even gets fan mail for the church displays and those he builds at home.



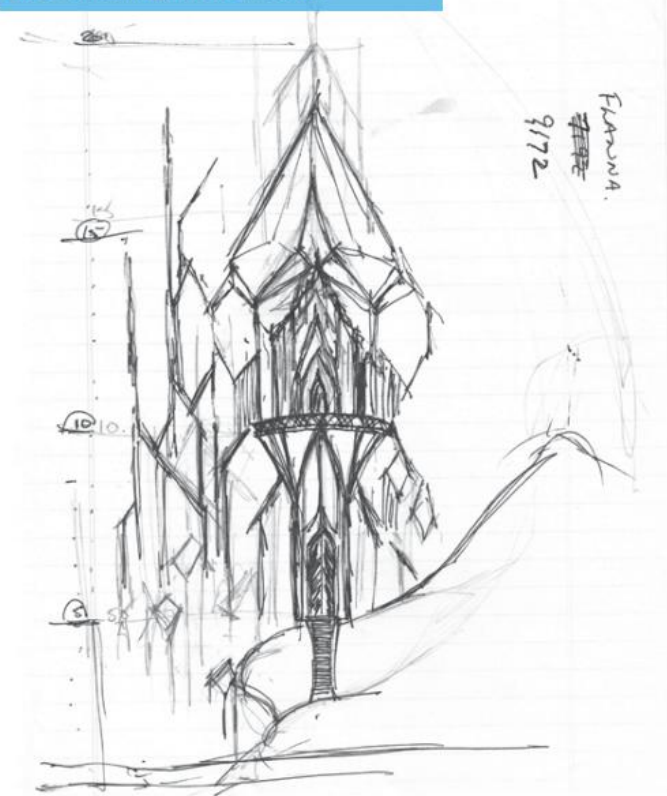
Don's sculptures are often complex in design and their creation involves a lot of metal wrangling.



After layer upon layer of mist freezes to cover the sculptures, the end result is simply beautiful.

Photo Credits: Don Greer

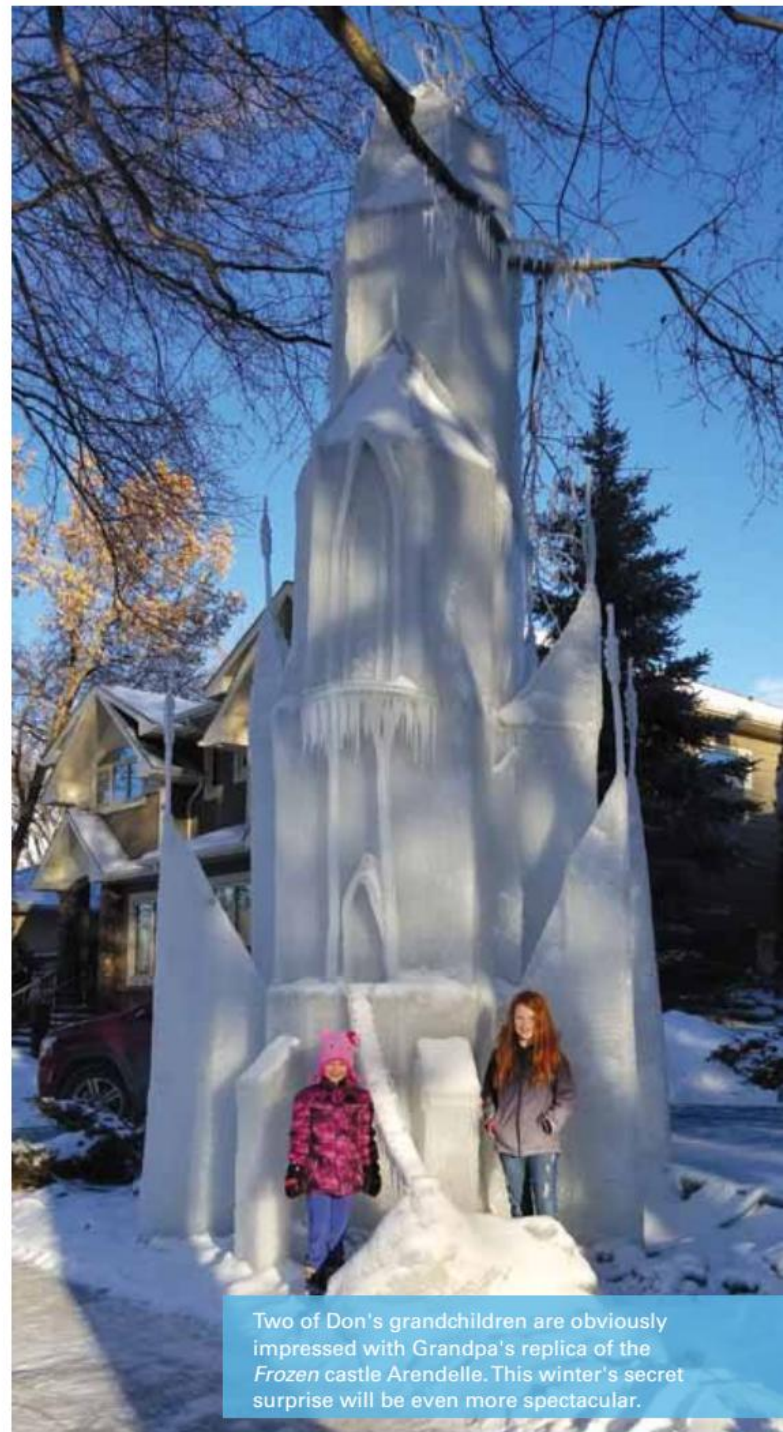
Every creation starts with some drawings, head scratching and 3D models.



His favourite gesture of appreciation sometimes comes in the form of “hot chocolate with a little crème de menthe in it!”

Not wanting to disappoint the congregation, Don has been known to take a sleeping bag to church. “When I did the church display last year,

I slept on the couch, working until early in the morning and getting up to finish the final layers. It works best at night, in the dark, low wind, and very low temperatures. Minus 30 is good.” He often does his work after his other ice-related hobby; he’s a curling instructor.



Two of Don's grandchildren are obviously impressed with Grandpa's replica of the *Frozen* castle Arendelle. This winter's secret surprise will be even more spectacular.

Photo Credit: Dave Laycock

On King Crescent, Don has delighted neighbours with the Three Wise Men, angels, a dove with a 16-foot wingspan, the Little Drummer Boy and Christmas Roses.

Long-Range Forecast

It's a matter of planning the project, creating the

drawings, then building the armature, installing the wire where needed. Leaving it to the last minute is folly.

“You can't go looking for chicken wire in the hardware stores in October. You just won't find much of what you need.” Projects are laid out months, even a year or ➤



Photo Credit: Sabine De Schutter

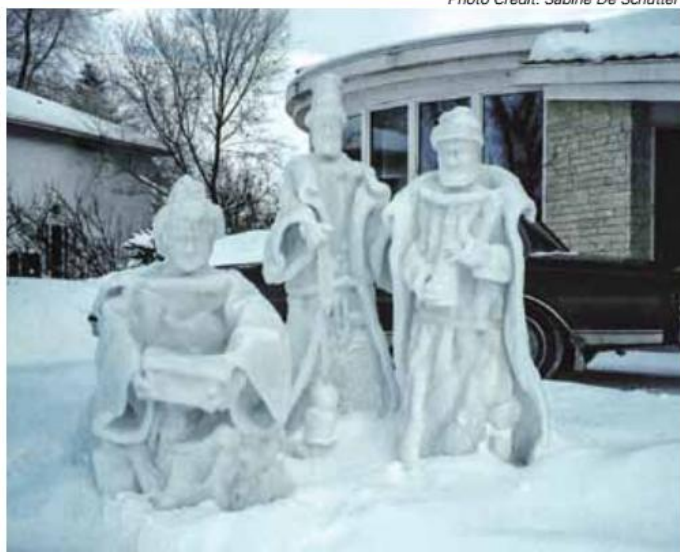


Photo Credit: Don Greer



His creations have graced the lawn at the Resurrection Lutheran Church for 16 years.

more in advance.

Then it comes down to giving the structure or sculpture the shape. Molding chicken wire takes a certain knack, and when he gets the forms just right, then the recipe literally says, “just add water.” That means sheer stick-to-itiveness with a garden hose in one hand and “a lot of hot chocolate in the other.”

He believes “climate change is a real thing.” In recent years, the critical elements that make for the best sculpture building and longevity have changed. Brown Christmases, sun and wind all wreak havoc.

In Frozen Fractals All Around

For fans of the movie *Frozen* (and for all those parents and grandparents with the song burrowed into the brain),

Don’s display last year was a jaw-dropping, mitt-clapping hit. He created a 22-foot replica of Elsa’s Arendelle Castle on his front yard. Work began November 11th, and Don spent two or three weeks on the frame in five to eight-foot sections. The frame went up in mid-December. It took 10 days before it was cold enough, but the castle was finished Christmas Eve. With a cold December and January, Arendelle lasted until mid-March.

Not to rest on last year’s performance—dare it be said he just can’t let it go?—Don is offering up the sweeping staircase from the movie, with figures of Elsa, Anna and the adorable Olaf, the friendliest snowman since Frosty.

“The grandchildren don’t know yet. Only *HOME*



Photo Credits: Don Greer



magazine and one other person have seen the sketches!" Don expects the staircase will take about three weeks. There are 26 steps with stringers, the W-shaped railing, two columns, the frozen fountain, and the three figures.

"I should point out that I do use actual chisels to carve away rough spots and drips that turn into icicles," Don says. "It wouldn't be a good look for Elsa, Anna, Olaf—or Baby Jesus at the church—to have runny noses."

Don's grandchildren marveled at last year's Frozen castle, and two of them posed in front for media coverage. When he's asked if they think Grandpa walks on water, he laughs.

"Maybe he walks on a little patch of ice." (H)

Karin Melberg Schwier

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FARMHOUSE MODERN

A COUPLE'S JOURNEY TO FEELING GROUNDED



JULIE BARNES



DAVID OH

When you plug the word “farmhouse” into Houzz’s photo search, over 490,000 images await your perusal. There are some common themes: white walls, apron sinks, peaked rooflines, natural finishes and lots of shiplap. It’s easy to see why the site provided plenty of

inspiration to Ryan Keeping and Jody Marshak when they began planning their new build in 2016.

The classic touches of the farmhouse aesthetic meant their new home wouldn’t date itself a decade later, which was ideal, given that the couple planned to stay

put for a while. In the six years they’ve been together, they’ve moved four times.

The couple briefly considered buying and renovating an existing home, but eventually agreed to build an infill, says Jody, “keeping in mind that we wanted to start a family and settle down.”

The older, craftsman style homes studded throughout Varsity View captured Ryan’s attention. “There are all these beautiful, steep-roofed houses with covered-in porches—we wanted to design a home that matched that aesthetic but was modern in every way.” ➤



The low-cost red oak flooring was laid in a timeless herringbone pattern throughout most of the main and second floor.



Homeowners Ryan and Jody.

Photo Credit: Lillian Lane

Small Town Atmosphere

Having lived in Buena Vista since 2014, Ryan and Jody loved the area and wanted to remain there, if they could find the right lot.

"The neighbourhood felt right for the type of lifestyle we have and the things that

are important to us," says Jody. "We loved the big trees, we loved our neighbours, so we said, 'Let's try and stick to this neighbourhood.'"

Ryan grew up at Christopher Lake and adds that Buena Vista has "a small-town atmosphere that I felt

when I was a kid growing up—actually knowing the person over the fence. It's ironic that in the middle of the city, I feel like there's these little neighbourhood communities."

The couple spends a lot of time by the river with their

two dogs, so when they discovered a lot for sale on Coy, it felt like the perfect fit.

Inspiration and Organization

Ryan has a long history in residential construction and has built many homes over the years. With the



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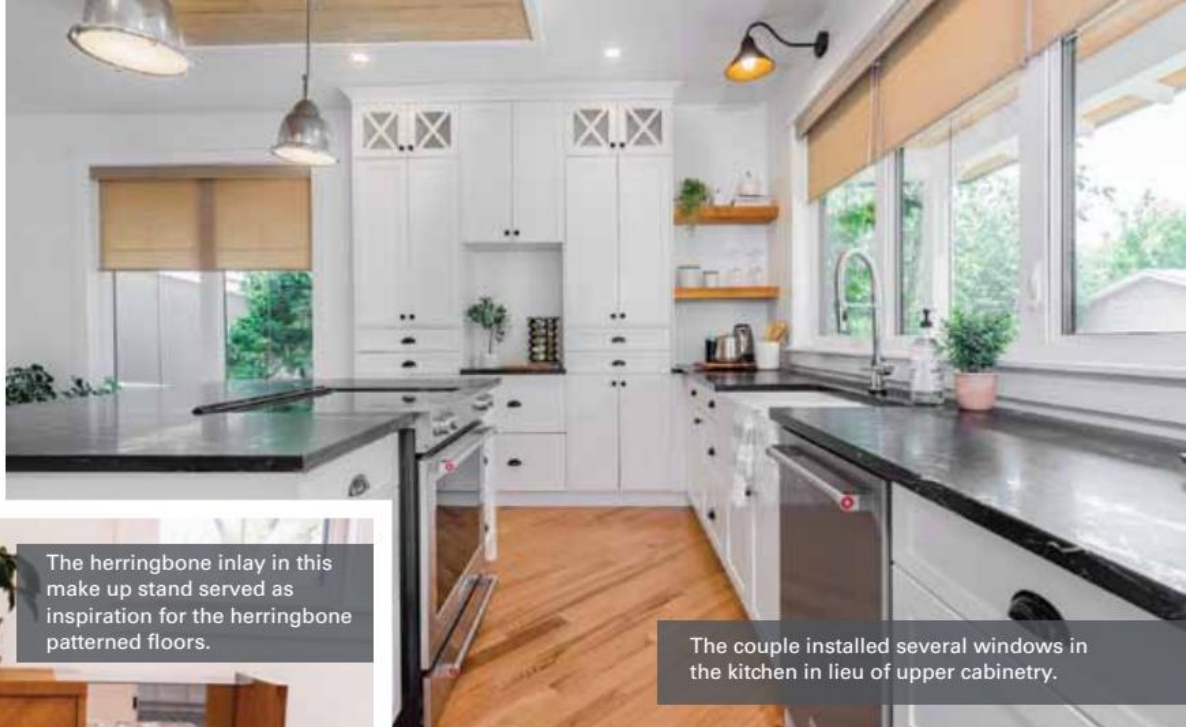
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The herringbone inlay in this make up stand served as inspiration for the herringbone patterned floors.

The couple installed several windows in the kitchen in lieu of upper cabinetry.

recent launch of their homebuilding company, Aardvark Professional Builders, he and Jody were finally able to begin building the home they always imagined.

"I used to frame houses in Canmore and Banff and I spent a couple of years

in Whistler and Revelstoke where the level of homes is just above and beyond," says Ryan. His new family home offered an opportunity to incorporate some of the design elements he absorbed during his time out west.

Ryan used Google ➤



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Ryan built a chevron patterned feature wall in the master bedroom with some extra cedar he had left over from previous projects.

Photo Credit (Below): Lillian Lane



Once the couple moved in, they hosted an open house and invited their new neighbours over. They received lots of positive feedback about how well the home suits the neighbourhood.

SketchUp to start designing the house and harnessed Houzz to refine the aesthetic. "If you are looking at mudrooms on Houzz and you find the perfect one, you can see what they've done in the rest of the house" says Ryan. "It's a great resource for that." He'd bring his ideas to Jody for further discussion.

This was Jody's first foray into home building. "This was never something I dreamed I would have the opportunity to do, so it was overwhelming," she says. "I went to Pinterest to guide me in terms of what I felt was going to work well together and the two of us would discuss it—that's how we determined what our finishes were going to be."

Luckily, their tastes were well aligned.

Natural Finishes

"I really like natural finishes, so as much as possible, we tried to use brick, wood and concrete," says Ryan. Most of the flooring on the main and second floor is red oak set in a striking herringbone pattern. "It's a really cost-effective hardwood...it's that entry-level price, but by jazzing up the installation, it can bring some of that character," he says.

Family Friendly

A graceful wraparound porch helped achieve that welcoming, farmhouse exterior they were looking for. "It was something we really wanted to have," says Ryan. "My mother's family farmhouse in Quill Lake has this beautiful, big wraparound porch and it's such a fixture for the whole family. We really wanted to pay homage to that."

While they were in the midst of designing the home, the couple was

struggling with infertility, says Jody. "For the longest time, Ryan and I thought we would only have dogs, so our dogs are extremely important to us—they are members of the family, so we wanted to create a little space specifically for them."

That space is a nook located just off the kitchen. It's a small area that houses their kennels and a self-filling water bowl. At the far end, tucked under a window, a dog door offers easy access to the dog run outside.

The couple designed the second level with two guest bedrooms, in addition to the master suite, with the hope that one of the guest rooms could be adapted for a future child's bedroom.

Feeling Grounded

While construction was in full swing, the couple were undergoing fertility treatments, and last spring,

after having been in their new home for eight months, they discovered Jody was pregnant and due in January 2020.

The guest-room-turned-nursery is now Jody's favourite room in the house, because of the charming dormer and the windows that allow sunlight to flood the space. "We've been waiting forever to have a baby so it's very sentimental for those reasons as well...it's a nice room to be in, but it's also very symbolic to us."

"Just having the house while we were going through this process was a grounding feature. This is going to be our home," says Jody. "This is where we are going to grow and build from, and it was nice, in times of everything else being unpredictable, to have that one thing that was actually grounding us." (i)

Julie Barnes



Ryan's mother's family farmhouse in Quill Lake served as the inspiration for the wraparound porch.



Photo Credit: Lillian Lane

Just off the kitchen is a nook for the couple's two dogs, complete with a doggy door that leads to a dog run in their backyard.



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SASKATOON HERITAGE AWARDS PROTECTING TOMORROW, TODAY



KARIN MELBERG SCHWIER



CITY OF SASKATOON ARCHIVES

Every two years, the City bestows awards to honour individuals, groups and organizations who work to conserve, preserve and rehabilitate, and are sensitive to Saskatoon's structures, natural and cultural spaces.

The Municipal Heritage Awards is a moniker that might lead people to think it's all about simply saving historic buildings. But it's much more than that.

Lenore Swystun is the chair of the city's Municipal

Heritage Advisory Committee (MHAC) and has been involved in the Heritage Society for nearly 30 years. She says the awards are "a really good opportunity for people to showcase the relevance of Saskatoon's

heritage and their efforts to tell our story."

In 1983 MHAC began discussions on creating a municipal awards program to encourage heritage conservation. The awards were designed to honour

the creativity, research and work on a variety of fronts with 'heritage value.' That means the 'aesthetic, historic, scientific, cultural, social or spiritually important, or significant elements for past, present or future generations.' The first Municipal Heritage Awards were announced in November 1985. The celebration was part the city's first annual Heritage Week.

"Because the awards cover so many different aspects of heritage, people are encouraged to apply as individuals, businesses, community groups, builders, contractors, designers, and others," says Lenore. Her own home is a 1926 property she is confident will exist for another 100 years.

Since 2018, awards are given at three levels. *Honour* recognizes exemplary efforts. *Merit* is given to projects making an important contribution, and *Recognition* certificates reward an accomplishment, project or effort that contributes to heritage conservation. That year, a new Youth Volunteer Public Service award was created to recognize the heritage efforts of young people who are making a difference in the community.

Buildings, Sites, Grounds Eligible

Judges review applications from work that preserves, restores and rehabilitates historic structures—private residences, public and commercial buildings, public sites, and private, public and commercial infill buildings. Consideration is given to work that protects, stabilizes, maintains, recovers or represents aspects of historic heritage. *Saskatoon HOME* selected just a few private residence winners to highlight. ➤



On previous page, the Underhill Residence at 307 Saskatchewan Crescent West, is a multiple-award winner. Here, the Pettit/Sommerville house, 870 University Drive, was honoured in 1987. Current owner Karen Sterner appreciates the attention heritage awards offer and says, "Sometimes old houses need all the friends they can get!"

Photo Credit: Kevin Appl

The Canadian Pacific Railway Station, 305 Idylwyld Drive North, is a heritage award winner for Restoration Commercial Building.



Photo Credit: City of Saskatoon Archives

In 2018, the distinctive Underhill Residence on Saskatchewan Crescent West was nominated. It won an Award of Honour in all three categories—Preservation, Restoration, Rehabilitation. The home was featured in *Saskatoon HOME*, “Living in a Landmark,” Winter 2016 issue.

Jenny spoke to *HOME* then about her contractors', Strata Developments and Rocco Masons—sensitivity

to making “the house look exactly like it once did. It’s been 106 years, and now we’re okay going into the next century,” she adds. “Maybe I’ll be a tiny footnote in the history of this home and they’ll be happy I took on this project.” The recognition by the City was “a nice bonus, but it was more about the work done and materials used,” Jenny recently added. “We love this house, so

the goal of preserving and restoring had more to do with keeping the design consistent with the rest of the home.”

In the Restoration Private Residence category, Karen Sterner and Stephen Boechler had their hard work recognized in 1998. They won for their Sympathetic Restoration work on their home at 852 Saskatchewan Crescent East. In 1989, the previous owners of Karen

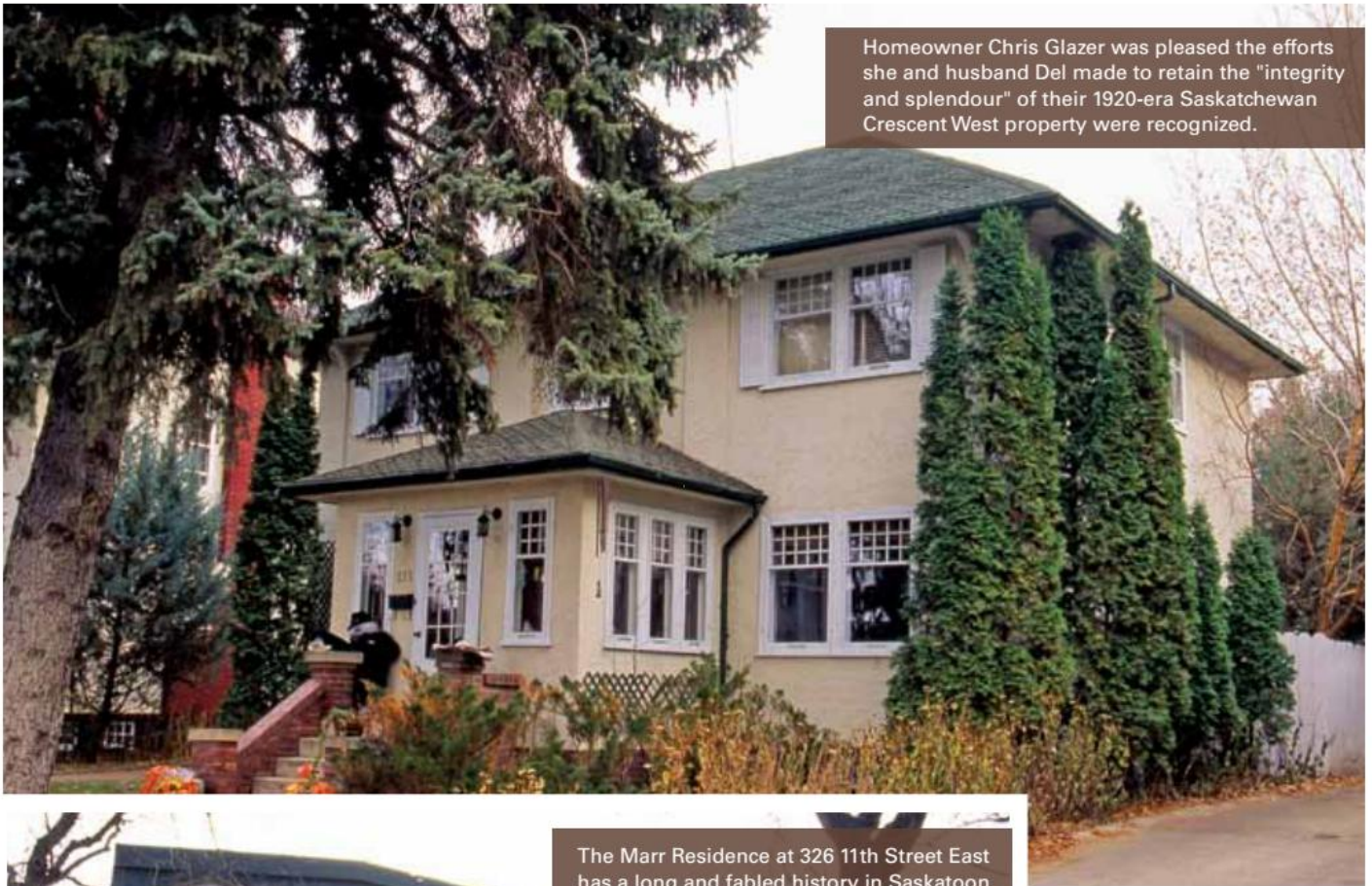
and Steve’s current home, 870 University Drive, were given a similar award. The 1912 Pettit/Sommerville Residence was featured in *Saskatoon HOME*, Spring 2017 issue, “Restoring the Grand in Pettit: A 13-year love affair.”

“We were very gratified to receive the award because it is a recognition from the city of our great efforts,” Karen says of the Saskatchewan

The Jacoby/Bouvier home, 1024 11th Street East, received an award for sensitivity as an infill in an established neighbourhood.



Photo Credit: Rita Bouvier



Crescent property, "and of our belief in the value of these older homes. I think the awards also brings this focus to the public eye, as people notice when awards are given and what they are given for." The awards offer encouragement and incentive for people thinking about restoration and preservation work. "Older houses need all the friends they can get!" she adds. "But I think everybody in the neighbourhood would agree that a beautifully cared for older home lends a special charm to the area and is looked upon with fondness by all who pass."

At 212 Saskatchewan Crescent West, homeowners Chris Glazer and Del Doyscher received an award in 1992 in the Renovation Private Residence category.

"The award was so ➤

Photo Credits: City of Saskatoon Archives

appreciated. Del and I were committed to maintaining the integrity and splendour of our newly purchased home," says Chris. "It was built in the 1920s when few structures existed on our street. We felt we accomplished our goal when we received the award. We have since renovated further, but always respect the original design and authentic materials used by the original builders and artisans."

Adaptive Reuse, Sensitive Infills, Additions

The adaptive reuse category focuses on projects that integrate a new use into a heritage building while maintaining character and integrity. Infills and additions that are 'sympathetic' to the original character of the neighbourhood and other nearby heritage properties are eligible.

Elements like scale, height, massing, roofline and finishing characteristics are considered.

Paul Jacoby and Rita Bouvier built their new home at 1024 11th Street East in 1987. In 1989, their efforts earned them an award in the Infill Private Residence category.

"Combining our love for old houses, old neighbourhoods and old trees involved some risks, but they were worth taking," says Paul. "Now, we are surrounded by infills that have brought value, beauty and revitalization to our neighbourhood."

Awards Recognize More Than Just Houses

In addition to recognition for private residences, businesses and commercial buildings, awards are given to other public and private entities that protect and

The Albert Community Centre received an award for Restoration Public Building.

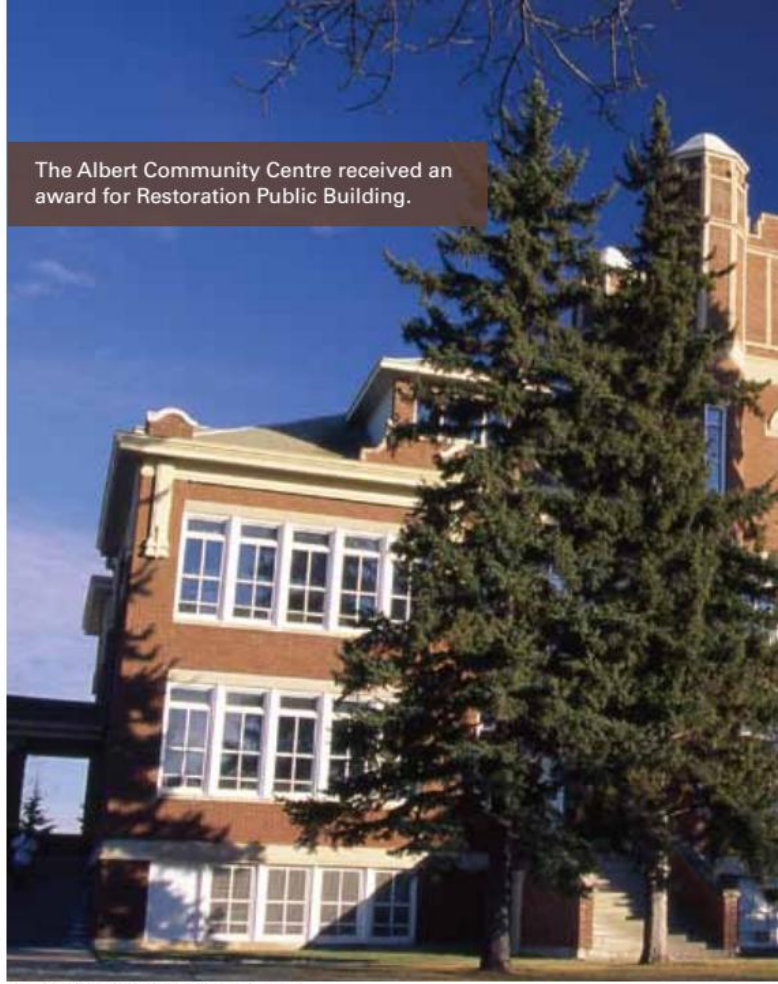


Photo Credits: City of Saskatoon Archives

The Land Titles Building at 311 21st Street East was given a Municipal Heritage Award for Restoration Commercial Building.





promote the heritage value of the community. Other categories include Heritage Space, which includes non-building sites, natural or cultural. The award is given for demonstration that the heritage value of an historic site has been conserved and interpreted in a way that complements any new design or activities. The Education, Volunteer Public Service, and Youth Public Service Awards were designed to recognize individuals, groups and organizations that promote heritage conservation in a variety of ways, including education and public service.

Next Awards Announced in 2020

An independent panel of judges representing the Municipal Heritage Advisory Committee, the architecture and design community, and the Saskatoon Heritage Society reviews the

applications. The awards are given every two years, taking turns with Doors Open Saskatoon, another City heritage initiative. Catherine Kambeitz, the Heritage and Design Coordinator with the City's Planning and Development branch, says the next awards will be given in February on or near Heritage Day.

Lenore Swystun encourages people to review the application process; forms are available online. "Winners have bragging rights to show the work they put in to maintaining and appreciating the rich history of this city, its people and places." (i)

Karin Melberg Schwier

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KARIN MELBERG SCHWIER



JACLYN HEINRICH

Little Palma Cafolla used to play for hours in her Irish mother's flower garden, immersed in safe, sweet fragrances and pretty colours. But she also gravitated to her Italian nonna's darkly verdant culinary-infused plot, with its mysterious mulch and pungent soil, fungi, ferns, savoury herbs, heavy with scents that compelled her

to see, smell, taste and touch. She didn't know her co-mingled passions would take her down another garden path, one that would lead her to become one of Canada's few authentically trained perfumers, a scent artisan.

Today, in her perfumery on Saskatoon's west side, Palma surrounds herself with bottles of fine imported

oils, resins and extracts, the essence of pure perfume. Each perfume she creates has a complex story, a top note beginning, middle heart and base note end. A perfume without a story, she insists, is without meaning. Destined to carry on this ancient art, together with business partner Del Thomson, Palma founded Zingaro. And at a time when many are tired of

fake fragrances and chemical facsimiles, people are paying attention.

Seeking Natural Justice

A bit of a gypsy at heart (*zingaro* is Italian for gypsy), Palma left Dublin at 17 to pursue her love of nature. After studying floral design in London, she opened a flower shop back in Ireland, and developed a loyal clientele

who appreciated her unique eye. But still she felt the call of something deeper.

"It always bothered me to go into a department store where girls at the perfume counters were spraying these strips with scents that smelt of a strange scent that said 'jasmine' or 'narcissi' but was nothing but a void in space, not those beautiful flowers that I touched and adored daily," Palma recalls. "I wanted to smell beautiful, but I couldn't because nothing brought the same joy to me as real flowers, foliage, and herbs. The more I looked at it, the more I wondered why it was called 'rose' or 'oud' or 'forest floor' when it wasn't. Why couldn't we have the real thing?"

Determined to "do nature justice," Palma set off for the perfume capital of the world on the French Riviera. There she

studied at the Grasse Institute of Perfumery and became enchanted with the creation of real perfume. She found herself immersed in an age-old craft.

An Ancient Art

It is often assumed that perfume was created to mask the lack of hygiene in the 1800s, but in fact, perfume put down roots long before Christ. The first recorded perfume maker lived in Mesopotamia 3,000 years ago.

"*Per fumus*, from the Latin, means to light, to pass through smoke," she says. "It was sold by peddlers and used like incense to worship the gods. Only very special people got to enjoy it. It was an art to extract the oils, and very few people could do it. Royalty would guard their perfumer and command him to create exclusive scents." ➤



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Perfume Myths

☛ *Spray perfume on your wrists and rub together.* This only warms the skin and makes the fleeting top notes disappear faster. Just let it rest on your skin.

☛ *Smell coffee beans to cleanse the olfactory palate.* If you are trying on more than one perfume, step into fresh air and breathe to reset your sense of smell. Coffee contains pyrazines, powerful compounds perfumers avoid when developing scents.

☛ *You will know immediately what perfume to buy.* All scents change after ten minutes so never judge a perfume on the first spray. Apply to forearm, walk away, revisit your arm throughout the day. If it's right for you, you should connect with it in a sensual way. Remember to date a perfume before you marry it.

Cleopatra, the last true pharaoh of Egypt, was a worshipper of perfume. "She bathed in it. She had pathways scattered with petals when she walked. When she sailed to Antony, her lover, she had her ship's sails draped in jasmine vines so he would smell her approaching."

Returning to the Natural World

"As children, we lived through nature," says Palma. "We examined the earth. We lifted the moss to look underneath, to smell it. You almost want to eat it, it smells so rich. The mushrooms. The roots. You find a tiny fern. It's all so glorious."

In the late 1800s, chemists were beginning to realize they could recreate some of

these natural scents in the lab without the real thing. At the turn of the century, synthetics hit the market. Big perfume houses could produce them for pennies a bottle. "The real perfumer," Palma sighs, "was lost behind closed doors, a slave to the fashion house that demanded he create what was the trend for the era through chemicals, fake molecules and rarely real ingredients."

And today, she bemoans, we live in a 'scent sensitive' society. "It's not the real world we're allergic to, it's all the synthetic chemicals we've created. Children live sterile lives. Don't touch that, don't eat that, don't get dirty. Children need to pay attention to the details on the ground. There's something wonderful



Photo Credit: Gina Loree Photography

Creating a perfume is a process that can take months, even years. It is an ancient art with its beginnings before Christ.



about looking under a log to see who's under there. We're forgetting one of our most important senses. Smell is the one that transports us to memories, carries us through life, and that's why it's the last one to leave us when we die."

Fates Conspire

A variety of fates conspired to bring Palma and her two sons to Saskatoon almost six years ago. She was finishing her perfumery studies by distance while she made a home here, arriving in November when the prairie world is devoid of smell.

Fate gave her a nudge in the form of Del Thomson, then her co-worker at Anthology Home Collection on 20th Street. As their friendship grew, "I shared with him, probably annoyingly on a daily basis, everything about scent, our senses, my love of perfume, on and on. I told him about my dream of becoming the real perfumer

back and setting up my own perfumery here on the prairies." He offered to be her business partner. "I could have kissed his feet!" She laughs. Zingaro was born. "Del makes the candles, and I am the perfumer."

Palma imports her oils, resins and extracts from around the globe. "The best citrus oils come from Italy, the bergamot, petitgrain. The best jasmine from Grasse in France, the best rose from Bulgaria and India, the best out from India."

After determining the perfume 'story' Palma wants to tell, the next process can take the most time. "You are then physically putting the story in the bottle," she explains. "You start with the notes. The top, heart and base and, drop by drop, add your compositions. You smell, reduce, increase or totally eliminate. It's a long process and can take months, even years." ➤

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Eau de cologne 2—5%

Eau de toilette 4—10%

Eau de perfume 8—15%

Eau de parfum 15—25%

Parfum 25—40% (Palma blends to the parfum method only.)

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Zingaro partners Palma Cafolla and Del Thomson compare notes on a recent creation.



Photo Credit: Gina Loree Photography

It is an art form, and authentic perfumers are few and far between. "There are more astronauts in the world than perfumers," Palma points out.

"Once people understand the real thing, that's it. It's like burning paraffin candles. No one wants that anymore because it's like putting a diesel car in a closed room for 25 minutes." People no longer want to smell "like everyone else in the department store. When people understand what real candles and real perfume smells like, they won't go back." (H)

Karin Melberg Schwier

Scenting a Winter Home

"It's so important to bring real scent in to the home, especially during winters," says Palma Cafolla, perfumer and florist. She begins with a small pair of scissors. "When I go for a walk, I look for lovely junipers, pine, spruce, cedars. I snip here and there, small pieces with different textures, different colours. When you bring them in, they start to warm, the sap starts to move. You smell the natural essence. Lay them on the mantle or a table."

For a scent-infused holiday, she suggests natural items like cinnamon bark, star anise, clove, dried citrus leafs, eucalyptus, mandarin oranges which can all be found

locally during the holidays. "Hopefully you've saved some rosemary and mint from your fall garden or get some from a florist." Rub a little to release the scent. Make pomanders by poking cloves into the rind of oranges. "A beautiful bowl of those on your dining room table creates a gorgeous natural scent."

The same perfume ritual for the body works for the home. "Before you know it, you feel so much better because it's real. The more we eliminate those chemical, synthetic smells from ourselves and our homes and replace them with real scents, we start to appreciate what is around us."



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HOME Q&A:

A STRONG, CARING MEMBER OF THE COMMUNITY

COLLEEN MAH



KARIN MELBERG SCHWIER



LILLIAN LANE



COLLEEN MAH looks out over the South Saskatchewan River toward the west bank, admiring the cityscape view from the fourth-floor condo she shares with her husband and co-owner of North Ridge Development Corporation, Wally Mah. From this vantage point, she talks about her obligation and privilege—both as a successful business owner and a private citizen—to give back. Colleen talks about family, business, and the philanthropy she believes is a pillar of a strong community.

Q. *What is it about your own upbringing—born and raised in Saskatoon—that has influenced your sense of obligation to respond to community needs?*

A. Wally and I are products of immigrant families. His parents emigrated from China. My dad was a truck driver with English and Irish parents. On Mom's side, my grandmother was Norwegian, my grandfather Swedish. There was a strong emphasis on getting an education, opportunities they never had. It wasn't a matter of if you'd go to university; it was for what and when. Because of their farming roots, there was a strong emphasis on pitching in. You got on your bike on Saturday morning and rode over to Grandma's to help clean house. You always took food to people in need. I could count on my mother having a frozen carrot cake in her freezer to take. You showed up to see how you could help, and you never went empty handed. ➤

Q: *You went to school here and met Wally in university. How did North Ridge Development Corporation come into being?*

A: We lived in the Westmount area and I went to E.D. Feehan High School. I was good at math, chemistry, trig, biology. For me it was a choice between pharmacy and commerce. I chose the latter and met Wally in second year. He was two years ahead of me, and we married seven years later. We both worked for Revenue Canada, and Wally was interested in building houses. The City had lot draws then, and Wally paid his sister to stand in line for three days. She sat in a lawn chair, used the bathroom at the library, and he got his first lot on Skeena Crescent. Wally and Julius Calyniuk established North Ridge Development Corporation in 1982. I was still working for Revenue Canada, but in 1998, Wally's sales manager left. He asked if I would come help, and I eventually developed the real estate brokerage. Some couples can work together and others just can't. For us, it's been good to share what we do as the business was built one foot in front of the other, one house at a time.

Q: *North Ridge has built thousands of homes and condos, and developed neighbourhoods in the city and further afield. Throughout the company's 37-year history, philanthropy has been a priority. Why?*

A: We've always supported charities, and we deal with probably 10 requests a week. We tried to focus on things important to a vibrant community like good arts and sports programs, good health care. We support the community that has supported us. But there are also things Wally and I personally believe in. We're both real softies when it comes to kids, so we gravitate to that.



Q: *One non-profit is particularly close to your hearts. Egadz, the non-profit that helps young single parents and their children get out of the welfare and foster care system. Personally and through North Ridge, you've contributed \$1.8 million.*

A: You always have to have skin in the game. If I just give you a handout, it's easy come easy go. But if you earn it, you value it. I think if you set things up so people take responsibility for their actions, you give them a better shot at turning their lives around. Don Meikle, the executive director, came to us over 15 years ago. The way he was trying to get kids off the street was what we believed could make a difference for kids serious about making a change.

To stop poverty, dependence on welfare, and addictions, you've got to stop the root causes. The Baby Steps group home has care workers for babies apprehended at birth. The babies are safe, moms come and bond, and learn how to take care of their children with the support they need. Some have been on the street since they were 12 and not only had no parenting skills, but are dealing with other issues. Baby Steps helps these young moms deal with these issues as they work to regain custody. Mah's Place is a transitional house right next door. Even after regaining custody, these moms still need support while they work on those personal issues. Sweet Dreams is the next step in a transition to a better independent life. Parents have custody, they're back in school or have a job. It's a communal setting, and there's help with the children. I marvel at how hard they've worked to keep their children out of foster care and turn their lives around.

Q: *Describe the Social Impact Bond and how it works.*

A: June Draude, then Minister of Social Services, approached us about the social contract idea. It's the first of its kind in Canada and involves investors who partner with non-profits to literally have a social impact. We invested \$500,000 in Sweet Dreams, and had the expertise to bring the house up to code. Conexus Credit Union matched our contribution. The contract stipulated that from 2014 to 2019, 22 children had to remain out of foster care for six months. The project more than surpassed that; 54 out of 55 children were successful. If the criteria were met, the government returns the money to the investor. Sweet Dreams continues to help moms and children to become independent.

Q: *Your \$500,000 was paid back. Then what happened?*

A: Wally and I chose to donate it back to reinvest in a new Egadz project. We are in meetings with Egadz to fund another capital project. One project we've been discussing is a Saskatchewan Housing Corporation apartment block that will be a clean and sober place for parents and their kids. Moms, as well as a couple of single dads, are helping retrofit the building, mentored by North Ridge trades. They're learning carpentry and painting. That sweat equity is their damage deposit. Again, some skin in the game to value what you work for while learning some valuable skills.

Q: *It would be easier to just write a cheque, but you want to be actively involved.*

A: When you do get involved, you're a bit of a role model in making this a better place to live. We need to take care of our own citizens, our neighbours. We raid my mother's freezer for one of those frozen carrot cakes and we take it to someone who is in need. (H)

Karin Melberg Schwier



"I think if you set things up so people take responsibility for their actions, you give them a better shot and Egadz is all about that. Because of our business experience, Don from Egadz understands we can contribute more than just money. And it's a place we see that money having a direct impact. We're so lucky to live in a caring community."





HOME FOOD: POCHERO

  **CRAIG SILLIPHANT**

I once had a good friend whose family emigrated to Saskatoon from the Philippines. I was invited to family dinners at his place. His mother would roll out all manner of authentic Filipino dishes. At the time, it was a special treat for me. But

now with the influx of all kinds of new Canadians, the availability of great food from around the world is at our fingertips.

When a Filipino gentleman I work with, Chris Rodriguez, offered to take me to his friend Buddy Amodia's place

to try a dish called 'pochero' it only took me a nanosecond to shout an emphatic "Yes!" And what I thought would be a quick cooking lesson turned into a brunch among friends. I was invited into Buddy's home, to eat at his table, and hear about his

struggles and triumphs in coming to Canada.

So, what is pochero? Well, it's a type of stew (or even soup) that originally came from Spain. In fact, the word comes from the Spanish word 'puchero' which means 'stewpot.'



The Spanish influence over the Philippines has been profound. It's more complicated than we need to go into here, but Spain first colonized the Philippines in the 1500s. Even their name comes from the king of Spain, Phillip II. Filipino traditions have a lot of elements, including Hispanic names like Rodriguez, that

are the collision of Filipino and Spanish culture.

Buddy and I talk while he preps. He learned recipes like this when he was young because his parents owned a restaurant in the Philippines. Buddy is now growing his own career as a chef, and has his own catering business, HomeBuddy.

"I grew up in the kitchen,"

he says. "I slept in the kitchen. This recipe, my mom would make in the cold season, early in the morning for the customers. It's an everyday recipe in our country. In fact, some of the regular customers will not come into your restaurant if you don't have this. It's healthy for us. We use vegetables from our garden. We have a small house,

but a big backyard garden. It's fresh and it costs less."

Five years ago, Buddy stumbled across a job in Canada that looked interesting. He filled out the forms, even thinking that it could be a scam. He wasn't even sure there was such a thing as Saskatoon.

"It's a blessing. It's an opportunity. A lot of ➤



Filipino want to go here to Canada. And it's not easy."

Buddy made it to Canada, against all odds. However, he had to leave his family in the Philippines. It's been some time before he could bring them here.

"I did not meet my son for four years and six months," he says. "The first time I hold my son was in the airport." Buddy says the adversity he has faced in his life has made him strong. His family is here in Canada with him now, and he believes if he could achieve that, he can do anything.

The ingredients are ready and Buddy walks me through the recipe. It's one of many because every tribe in the Philippines has its own take. A lot of pochoero recipes in the Philippines actually use tomato sauce. For this one, Buddy does not.

First, he pan sears a beef shank on both sides, then he adds water and boils the beef for 15 minutes. Then, in a clean pot, he adds oil and sautés garlic, ginger, onions, star anise, whole pepper corn, and bay leaves. He adds the beef shanks, corn, lemongrass, broth cubes, and salt. He pours enough water to cover the meat and brings it to a boil, simmering until the beef is tender. (You can also use a pressure cooker to do everything but the searing).

After this, Buddy adds the corn, green beans, lemongrass, and potato and cooks it all for another 15 minutes. He adds the cabbage and cooks for five minutes, then the bok choy and spring onions, cooking for another five. He finishes it off by seasoning it with fish sauce and freshly ground



Men in black from left, Buddy Amodia, Jaja Tan, and Christian Rodriguez welcome *Saskatoon HOME* foodie Craig to the table.

black pepper.

Eventually, our friend Chris arrives with another friend in tow, and Buddy sets a table. The four of us sit down to eat. Pochoero is often served with an extra plate where you can put some rice and scoop out the bigger ingredients to get to the broth. The fresh

vegetables give you a feeling that you're eating something that's good for you, yet the hearty meat fills you and the delicious broth goes straight to your core, warming your soul.

The four of us talk more about their journeys to Canada, memories of their home country, pochoero,

and their dreams in their new home. The pochoero is a wonderful winter dish and a reminder of the power of food to bring together people from around the globe and across the table, where it's easy to become friends. (i)

Craig Silliphant



BONE MARROW SOUP (BEEF POCHEIRO PINOY STYLE)

INGREDIENTS:

1.5 kg beef shank (with bone marrow intact, cut into 1.5 thick pieces)
120 g red onion (quartered)
100 g fresh ginger
2 pcs fresh corn (cut into 8 pieces)
A few large potatoes, peeled and cut into pieces
2 long stalks lemongrass
1 small cabbage, cut in quarters
1 whole garlic, peeled and pressed
500 g Pechay or bokchoy
4 large dried basil leaves
1 tsp whole peppercorn
¼ cup cooking oil
2 broth cubes
4 pieces star anise
1 small bunch spring onions
2 tbsp fish sauce
Salt and pepper

INSTRUCTIONS:

Heat the pot and sauté the beef shank until both sides are properly seared. In the same pot, add water and boil beef shanks 15 minutes. Drain, rinse, and remove any scum.

In a clean pot, add oil then sauté garlic, ginger, onions, star anise, whole pepper corn and bay leaves, add water. Add the beef shanks, corn, lemongrass, and salt. Pour enough water to cover the meat, then bring to boil. Simmer 1.5 hours or until beef is tender.

Add the rest of the ingredients and bananas (optional), corn, potato and continue to cook for 15 minutes. Add cabbage, continue to cook for 5 minutes. Add the bok choy and spring onions, continue to cook for 5 minutes.

Season with fish sauce and freshly ground black pepper, then serve.



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HOMEtown Reflections

 JEFF O'BRIEN

WARTIME HOUSING

Photo Credit: City of Saskatoon Archives - 1069-579-001

They're instantly recognizable: small, boxy, cookie-cutter houses scattered across older neighbourhoods in almost every city in Canada. The federal government built 33,000 of them in the years just after the Second World War to provide rental accommodation for returning soldiers and to help alleviate the massive housing shortage facing the country.

Wartime Housing Limited was the Crown corporation

that managed the program, and it was originally established to build cheap, temporary housing for workers in Canada's wartime industries. The mandate changed in 1944 as war production wound down and soldiers began coming home.

That year, Canada's urban housing deficit was estimated at 500,000 units, a legacy of the Great Depression, when residential construction had ground to a halt. In Saskatoon,

only 143 new homes were built between 1934-1944, nearly all of them without flush toilets or running water. Maintenance of existing homes also suffered during those lean years; by 1944, much of the housing stock was in poor condition. In consequence, we were completely unprepared to welcome our share of the 620,000 servicemen set to come home in 1945-1946, a great many of them bringing wives and families.

Saskatoon's Post-War Housing Crisis

In the winter of 1945, 1200 people were registered with Saskatoon's emergency housing coordinator, including 150 families needing immediate shelter. By 1947, the number of families on the register had jumped to more than 1,300. People were living in garages and garden sheds, and in the little cabins of the Saskatoon Tourist Camp by the Exhibition. There were



1546 Empress Avenue, 1958.

Photo Credit: City of Saskatoon Archives - Star Phoenix Collection - S-SP-B-2654-009

150 families living in the old air force training school at 33rd Street and Idylwyld, and 85 women were bunking down in a YWCA hostel at the Saskatoon Badminton Club. The Mayor was on the radio calling for the people of Saskatoon to open their homes to returning soldiers and their families, while Alderman Bill Grey, chair of the city's Housing Committee, was going door-to-door making the same appeal.

But what people needed were homes. So when the Wartime Housing company turned up, offering to build hundreds of inexpensive houses for ex-servicemen the answer was a resounding "yes."

The plan was simple. The city would provide vacant, city-owned lots at a dollar apiece and the government would build houses ➤

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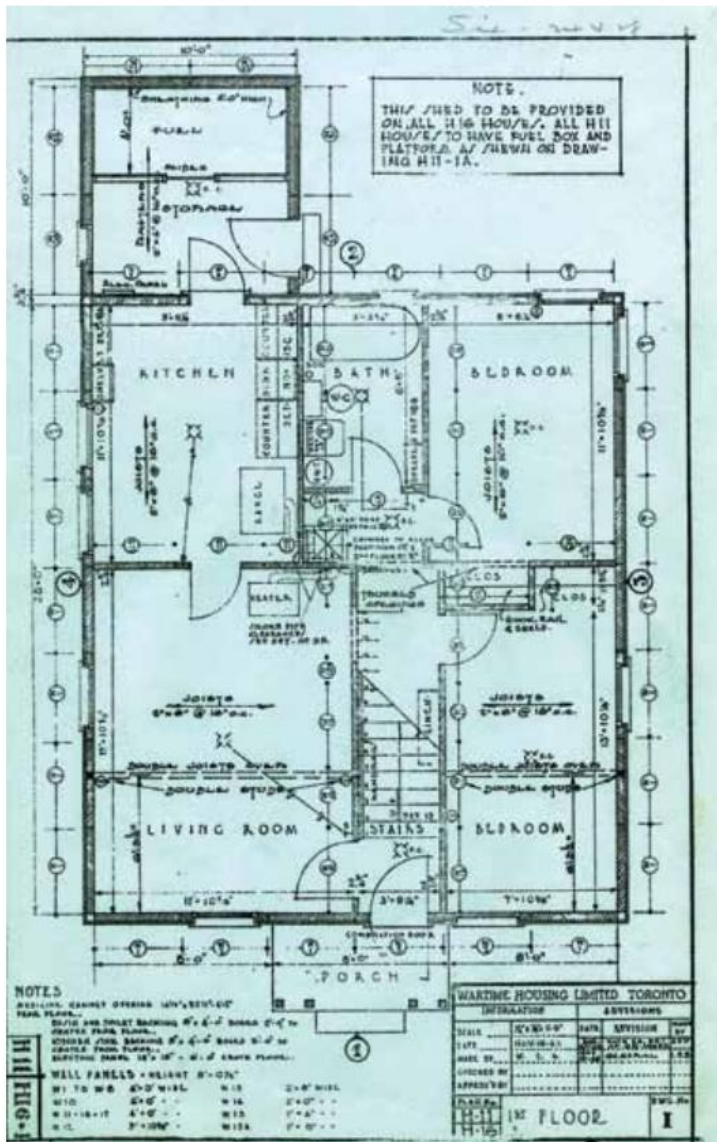


Photo Credit: City of Saskatoon Archives - 1069-579

on them, renting them out to ex-servicemen or their dependents, in the case of soldiers still overseas or those who had been killed in action. The houses were fairly modest, valued at \$3,400 each, and rented initially for \$22-\$30 per month, depending on size. Provision would also be made for renters to buy their houses, from the proceeds of which the city would receive a portion. At the end of the program, the city could buy any unsold properties for \$1,400.

Work on Project No. 1—the first of six undertaken here—began on April 17, 1945. On October 13, Ernest M. Little and his family moved into the first completed wartime

house in Saskatoon, at 935 Avenue I North. By December, the first hundred houses were complete and construction had begun on two hundred more. By the time the program wound up, 900 homes had been built in Saskatoon, most of them huddled together in little clusters in the largely undeveloped outlying areas of the city, with another thirty in Sutherland, at that time a separate community. Altogether, they housed more than 3,000 people in a city that had seen its population swell from about 43,000 at the end of the war to 53,000 in 1951.

Problems Below the Surface

It wasn't all sunshine

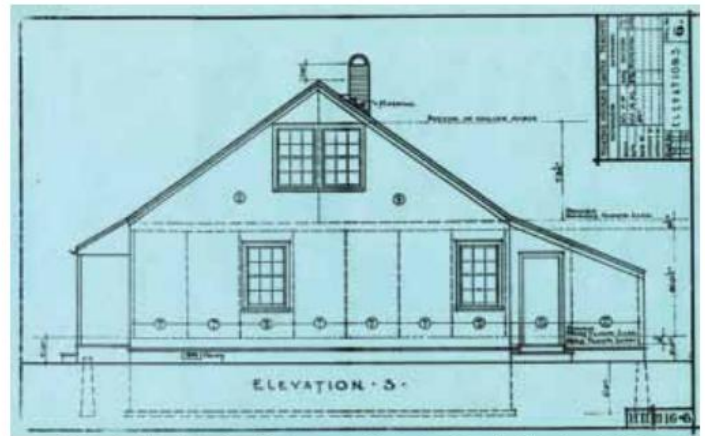


Photo Credit (below): City of Saskatoon Archives - Star Phoenix Collection - S-SP-B-930-001

Idylwyld Drive cul-de-sac, 1951.





Wartime house in 1958.

Photo Credit: City of Saskatoon Archives - Star Phoenix Collection - S-SP-B-2654-004



1328 10th Ave North, 1958.

Photo Credit: City of Saskatoon Archives - Star Phoenix Collection - S-SP-2654-003



1328 10th Ave North, 2019.

Photo Credit: Jeff O'Brien

and roses. Authorities were unhappy with the "one size fits all" floor plans, particularly the lack of basements, which it was argued were needed for root cellars, furnaces and coal storage. There were also concerns about the plumbing, which failed to meet provincial and municipal building standards. There was even a brief strike by local carpenters following rumours the company was getting its millwork from non-union sweatshops in Montreal.

On the question of basements, the company refused to budge. As a slight concession, plans were modified to include small utility rooms attached to the back. It wasn't until Project No. 6, in 1949, that wartime houses here were built with basements. The plumbing issue boiled over in August of 1945 when local plumbers refused to work on the houses until they were

brought up to code. This the company refused to do, noting that the design met national housing standards and, in any case, under the terms of the agreement with the city, they were not bound by local bylaws. After much wrangling, the city agreed to pay for some of the requested changes, the company promised to address the others in future homes, and the plumbers went back to work.

Hostilities Emerge

The Canadian housing and retail lumber industries were generally hostile to the program, which it saw as harmful to its interests. There were also those who predicted that the low-rent housing districts would soon deteriorate into slums. In Saskatoon, some residents of Varsity View successfully blocked wartime houses from being built on Osler Street in 1949, claiming that they ➤

conflicted with the "first class" character (or perhaps the first class property values) of their neighbourhood.

One major problem was the cost of providing services. Most wartime houses in Saskatoon were built in undeveloped areas, requiring a considerable expenditure for things like lot grading, sewer and water mains, sidewalks and street paving, and the extension of power lines and street lighting. These would normally be paid for by local improvement taxes. But as federal properties, wartime houses were tax-exempt, and instead paid a set amount that barely covered the cost of services like garbage disposal and transit. And forget about school taxes! There was no money at all to pay for the 2,000 new students enrolled in city schools.



1430 Ave B North, 1958.

Photo Credit: City of Saskatoon Archives - Star Phoenix Collection - S-SP-2654-001



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1430 Ave B North, 2019.



Photo Credit: Jeff O'Brien

Slow on Streets, Sidewalks

Perhaps as a consequence, the city seems to have dawdled when it came to putting in streets and sidewalks. In 1950, the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (which had taken over Wartime Housing Limited in 1947) complained that some of the properties were inaccessible by vehicle and that the earth streets were impassable in the spring. But despite assurances that the work was in hand, it was several years before everything was completed.

The grants-in-lieu eventually increased and by 1954 they were the equivalent of full taxation. But tenants had been able to buy their homes since 1948, and by 1954 all but 75 of the 800 built in the first five ➤



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1416 Ave C North, 1958.



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1416 Ave C North, 2019.



Photo Credit: Jeff O'Brien

projects had been sold and were paying taxes anyway. The rest would soon follow.

By the end of 1949, Saskatoon's housing crisis had eased considerably. There was still a shortage of good quality, low-rental housing here, but the returned soldiers had been accommodated, 3500 new homes had been built, and the city's economic outlook was bright. The Saskatoon of the 1950s was to be a far different place from the one that preceded it.

True Survivors

Without actually going out and counting, it's impossible to say exactly how many of Saskatoon's wartime houses are left. An inventory done in the late 1990s counted about 800 still standing. Today, that number is assuredly lower, a consequence both of the ravages of time and of the recent housing boom, which saw a great many otherwise sound, smaller houses replaced by something newer and larger.

One thing we can say for certain is that the sneers of the naysayers and the predictions of those who sniffed disdainfully about "slum districts" turn out to have been mostly groundless. It is now almost exactly 70 years since construction began, and hundreds of wartime houses still stand, some shabby but most not, a testament to the skill of those who built them and the dreams of those who saw in them a solution to a problem. (H)

Jeff O'Brien



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 JULIE BARNES

When Bailey and Chad Fischl were designing their new home in Haultain five years ago, they had a few security features on their must-have list. They had already lived on the block for nine years by the time they decided to tear down their existing home and build new, and they were hoping to deter some of the unsavoury behaviour they'd witnessed over time.

"When we had our old

garage, we got broken into twice," says Chad. Graffiti was also a big issue, he adds. "It was non-stop." When they designed the new garage, they planned the wiring so they could easily incorporate motion sensor lights and a couple of cameras. One camera records their garage door and the alley, while another, mounted on the opposite end of the garage, offers a bird's eye view of

their backyard. "Ever since we've had the alley camera, we've had zero issues," says Bailey.

The DIY Route

After Chad's bike was stolen from their front porch, they decided to add a Nest cam with two-way communication and night vision above their front door. The Nest app sends customized alerts on their phones, based on

the types of activity they've chosen to be notified about. For example, they can choose to be alerted when the camera sees a person, but can ignore other types of motion, such as a car driving by.

For convenience and peace of mind, they installed Yale smart door locks that can be controlled remotely via an app. Temporary codes can be set to allow people to enter at specific dates and times, ➤

Lights, audio, security, cameras, heating and cooling, fireplaces, window treatments, door locks, intercoms and TVs can be controlled through tablets, remotes, cell phone apps and/or voice control.



As more products are ordered online, porch pirates are becoming more of a problem. Some homeowners are using cameras to deter would-be thieves.



such as a house cleaner or pet sitter.

Chad and Bailey also use Google Home to play music, adjust their Nest thermostat, control lights, and can even ask Google to lock their doors for them. The Google Home app also integrates into their alarm system, and they use a separate app called MyQ to ensure their garage door is down (or set it to automatically close after a certain period of time).

They've also gone the DIY route with a Nest doorbell camera. When someone rings their doorbell, it sends a push notification to their phones through the app. "It will ring as if a call is coming through," says Chad. "I'll hit 'open' and I'll be looking at the person at the front door and then I can two-way communicate with them."

With two young children at home, it's not always easy to answer the door. If a courier arrives to deliver a package while they're putting their baby down for a nap, they can use the app to ask the courier to tuck the package out of sight.

Although some of their neighbours have had porch pirates pilfer their packages, Bailey and Chad have managed to deter the thieves so far. "It's crazy how much of a difference motion sensor lights and cameras make," says Chad.

The Custom, Hard-wired Route

Over in Grosvenor Park, Sheena and Jeremy Sinclair have also noticed the difference good lighting makes. Five years ago, they undertook a major renovation, which included

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the installation of a Control4 home automation system.

The hard-wired system allows the couple to control lights, music, room temperature, TVs, blinds and security via a touch panel on their wall, through remotes, or the Control4 apps on their phones. The app also allows them to control all the elements remotely—whether they're out running errands or out of the country.

They can set lights to go on and off at random intervals if they're not home. "It's amazing how lighting fixes security. Our house and garage is lit up like a Christmas tree at night," says Jeremy. "Lighting is security."

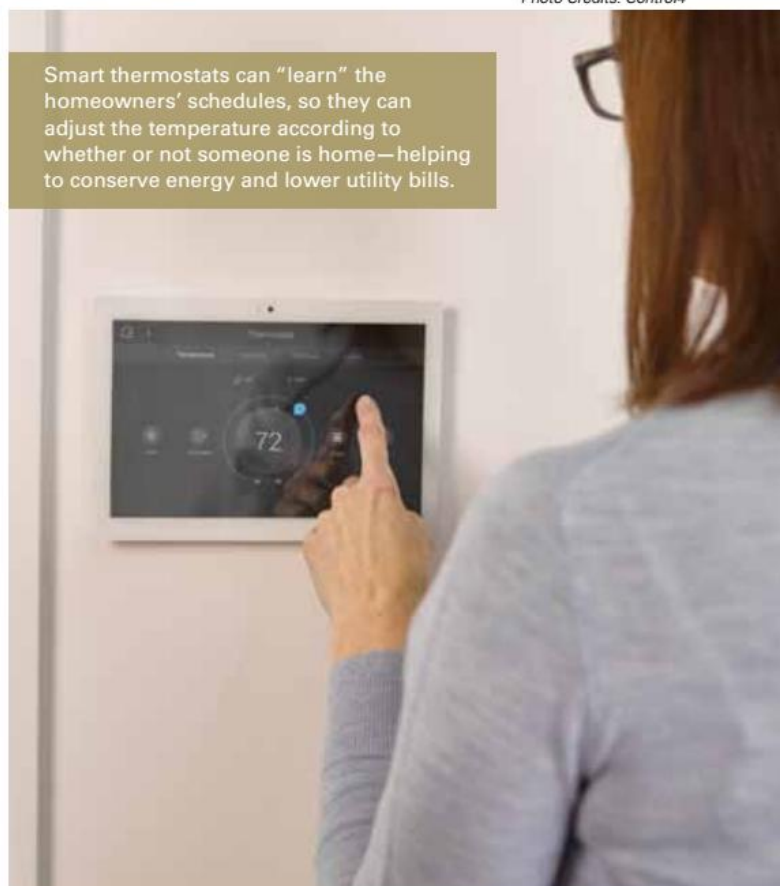
Sheena's favourite feature is the customized light settings. The two settings in their daughter's nursery have proven to be particularly

convenient, she says. "I have one that turns on the lights on full power and another button that, if I press it, it comes on at 10 per cent, so if I have to do a diaper change at night, I'm not waking her up. Then, as she grows, that function isn't as important anymore so I can change it to another function."

An equipment rack in their basement controls and corrals everything—so there are no unsightly wires, audio equipment or cable boxes in sight. "Everything is in this rack," says Jeremy. "It's basically the computer that runs your house."

Although their two kids are too young to break curfew, they'll be ready to hold them accountable when the time comes. Each member of the family can have their own code for the front door. Every time the door is ➤

Smart thermostats can "learn" the homeowners' schedules, so they can adjust the temperature according to whether or not someone is home—helping to conserve energy and lower utility bills.



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opened, the code used and a time stamp are logged in the app. "If the kids try to sneak out in the middle of the night, you'll know," says Jeremy with a smile.

As the owners of Bella Vista Developments, specializing in home building and renovations, Sheena and Jeremy say about 50 per cent of their clients are interested in integrating some home automation features.

"Some people might say,

'We're going to do the main floor but not the basement,'" says Sheena. "That might be a compromise if they really want some of the features, but the entire house isn't in the budget." Other clients

will request that their homes be pre-wired for speakers, but not a complete home automation system, she adds.

Since they installed their system, Control4 has developed new add-on features, such as the ability to make voice commands. But this feature isn't something Jeremy is interested in adding. "Your phone is beside you at all times, you have a remote in your hands, the switches are here. I wouldn't pay the extra money to talk to someone."

Preferences and Privacy

As the co-owner of SuRe Innovations, Tom Redhead says that voice control is the current buzzword in home technology, even if it's not for everyone.

Home automation systems can be customized by room and by family member, he says. "Maybe some family members prefer voice—kids love those kind of things—so maybe they have a Google Home in their bedroom that they're operating that way. But maybe mom and dad don't want voice control—they like the touch panel on the wall or a hard button. They can blend those things together."

Privacy concerns are a reason homeowners avoid voice control, but some automation systems have remedied that. Tom says the Savant system allows homeowners to push a

button on a remote to turn on a microphone. "You can be in your living room and hold the button and say, 'Change to TSN' and then let go and it's not listening to you anymore."

Big Brother: Friend or Foe?

In some cases, you don't want to feel like Big Brother is always watching and in others you want to harness those powers of observation for your own sense of security. Back in Haultain, Chad and Bailey have managed to deter most of the aforementioned unsavoury behaviour—except for one incident last Halloween when an un-costumed teenager stole the entire bowl of Halloween candy (bowl included) they had left on their front step.

"We know what you look like, buddy," says Bailey with a laugh. ☺

Julie Barnes

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